Reincarnation

TRUE

OR

FALSE

?

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Are the Theosophic Claims of Reincarnation Proven by Modern Science and the Spiritual Philosophy?

BY

REV. E. W. SPRAGUE

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Reincarnation—True or False?

Are the Theosophic Claims of Reincarnation Proven by Modern Science and the Spiritual Philosophy?

For thirty-six years we have been seeking the truth regarding the subject of reincarnation. We have read a great deal, listened to lectures on the subject, and have met and conversed with some of its leading exponents; and through all this investigation we have as yet to receive the first real proof of the truth of reincarnation.

Whatever the truth may be we are desirous of obtaining it, believing with the Nazarene that "the truth shall make men free."

We have tried to go back into the misty past and to recall some little incident that might satisfy us that we have lived in a former life, but everything is blank, entirely blank.

If the reader in perusing this work should think the author speaks in too familiar and positive terms regarding spirit-communion and the things of the spirit-world, we would ask him to consider the fact that for more than thirty-six years he has been a spirit-medium actively working in the field of Modern Spiritualism and has been blessed by daily communion with the spirits of that better world; and naturally the things of the spirit-world of which he speaks are to him realities, as potent, as certain, as natural and as true as are the things of this life. The truth of spirit-communion is to him no more strange or mysterious than the most commonplace experiences of this life. Much that he has learned of the spirit-world he has received personally from its inhabitants.

We have never lived in France and what we know about that country we have learned from people who have been there who know about it. We may say the same of the spirit-world; we take the word of its inhabitants whenever it coincides with our reason.

REINCARNATION—TRUE OR FALSE?

If reincarnation is true, it will remain true whatever we may think about it. If it is not true, it will not become true though all the world proclaim it true.

The writer has perfect faith in the Great Cause of things, and is satisfied that if reincarnation is true it is right. What we want to know is the truth of the matter. We do not believe it is true, but we are open

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to conviction. Reincarnation does not appeal to us, as it seems to contradict science, philosophy and all natural law, including the laws of progression. But if we are mistaken and it is true, we want to know it. Reincarnationists will do us a favor if they will present the proof of their claims. It is our great desire to find the truth, whatever it may be, and in discussing this question and comparing views we may arrive at a better understanding of each other's belief if not of the subject.

Can anyone disprove reincarnation, or can anyone prove it true? This is an important question and at present appears to be like the question, "Are the other planets inhabited?" Some say yes, others say no; but who knows? However, it is well to theorize on questions of importance, because in the discussion the truth *may* be discovered.

In discussing the claims of Reincarnationists the writer is determined to be fair and just, and he does not claim that his conclusions are final, notwithstanding the fact that he has decided views on this much-mooted question.

Because we cannot appreciate the "Beauties of Reincarnation" let no one think we have any feelings of ill will toward anyone who believes in it. There is not the slightest reason for such a thing. Some of our best friends are believers in it and some of our most intimate co-workers accept the doctrine as true.

We love our friends for their goodness of heart and their nobleness of character, and we enjoy their society because of the liberal spirit they possess. Spiritualists are not chained to the stake. Spiritualism does not exact of its members a belief or disbelief in reincarnation, as the orthodox Christian church exacts of its members a belief in the "Holy Trinity" or of a "physical resurrection" of the dead.

Spiritualists are truth-seekers and free-thinkers. They differ one from the other in belief quite frequently, and they were never known to make a creed and then try to force another Spiritualist to believe it, nor threaten him with eternal punishment if he does not. Spiritualists have outgrown that bad habit of Christianity since they have advanced out of it and become Spiritualists; and if they differ on certain points of belief—as they often do—they agree to disagree and jog along together happy in the knowledge of the proven truths revealed to them through spirit-communion.

What Spiritualists *believe* does not count for as much as what they *know*. Some Spiritualists *believe* in reincarnation, and some do not. Like other people, they sometimes theorize on unprovable questions.

CAN WE LEARN NOTHING WITHOUT PERSONAL EXPERIENCE?

Reincarnationists teach that we must be re-embodied many times and experience the many dif-

ferent conditions of life before we can become mentally and spiritually developed. Such teachings call forth questions like the following: Must each one be born and live the life of a boy and man, born again in female form and live out the life of a little girl and of a woman in order to learn of sex? Must one be born a savage, and born again in civilization to get the experiences incident to the two conditions of life? Must we, as some Theosophists have taught, live a life committing a murder, and being executed in punishment therefor, in order to learn the sacredness of life? Must we end one of our earthly lives by suicide to learn the lesson of sorrow and remorse that it teaches? Must one be born a cripple in one life and an athlete in another; a philosopher in one life, an idiot in another; a cannibal, a savage, an artist, a mathematician, a sailor, a mechanic, a scavenger, a king, etc., etc., ad infinitum, to understand each condition of life and to become a respectable kind of a human being? We think not. We believe we can develop an understanding of those things without the actual personal experience of committing murder or suicide. Remorse of conscience is developed in one ordinary life—this—and the fear of death inborn in man teaches him that murder and suicide is wrong; and so with other things. In one single life a man develops intelligence, love, sympathy, the faculty of reason, etc., and with these faculties he is able to work out the problems of life in their various departments. These faculties tell him as plainly as experience could tell him the difference between right and wrong, and that murder and suicide are grievous wrongs. For these and many other equally good reasons reincarnation is needless.

DO EXPERIENCES NEED TO BE REPEATED?

Is it necessary for one to experience the same thing a hundred or a thousand times to know its meaning? If so, there may be virtue in reincarnation. Experience is a great teacher, but does one need to burn his hand one hundred times to learn that fire burns? Does one need to be born a babe hundreds of times and learning each time by experience that water quenches thirst and food satisfies hunger? Is not one life of earth sufficient to teach these primary lessons of life and is not consciousness and memory capable of retaining them in the spirit-world? If so, then does not the same apply to all else that man may learn in this life? And if the spirit-world is a world of progress and evolution, as Spiritualism teaches, why should a wise spirit return to babyhood again and again, forgetting all he had acquired in many lives of earth and as many more in the spirit-world? Will some sincere Reincarnationist please answer? Can a satisfactory and convincing answer be given?

DO WE LEARN OF BABE LIFE BY BEING A BABE?

The babe on its entrance into this life has no development of reason; having had no experience, its intellect has received no unfoldment. It has no knowledge of anything, probably not being conscious of its own existence. It may be said to possess a little, a very little, of what is called instinct. Instinctively it will nurse when its mouth is filled. What is more helpless? Is there any animal in creation so helpless as a babe? A lamb, a colt, a kitten, a pig, and many more of the young of the lower animal creation on entering this life jump to their feet, run around, invite themselves to dine, and manifest more physical and mental ability than do the offspring of the king of animals, man. Does this manifestation of physical and mental power in the offspring of the brute prove its having had many other incarnations in lower animal forms, as extraordinary precocity in a child is said by Reincarnationists to prove it has lived in a former life? If these indications apply in one case, why not in the other? If reincarnation is true in the case of men, may it not also be true in the sphere of the lower animals?

Utterly helpless is the babe both mentally and physically. We cannot accept the teachings of Reincarnationists without further proof, since great statesmen, warriors, discoverers, inventors, emancipators, philosophers, scientists, etc., must give up and forget all the education, knowledge, mental power and ability that they have acquired in a lifetime of persistent effort and hard work to become again a helpless, ignorant, undeveloped babe, not being able to manifest as much mental or physical power as a pig twenty minutes old.

We learn of babe life by possessing babes of our own, and the study of them. All we know of babe life we learned after we have ceased to be babes. Therefore, successive reincarnations as babes are superfluous as they are useless in man's intellectual and spiritual advancement.

If one must be a babe and live the babe life over and over again, learning to smile, to cry when he wants something because he doesn't know how to ask for it, etc., until he has learned the same things hundreds of times, and even then is not sure of the permanency of this simple knowledge, what good can come of it?

What is the use of one's having lived throughout the many great cycles of time and being reincarnated again and again if out of it all one has not retained the ability to walk a step, speak a word or think a thought?

"INCOMPATIBLE FAMILY TIES DISAPPEAR THROUGH REINCARNATION."

One Reincarnationist, in an article published in the *Progressive Thinker*, says: "Geniuses are generally out of balance. They perfected themselves in certain directions in a previous embodyment. We recognize their special attribute and admire it, but deplore their weakness. But that is why they are here, namely, to delight the world with their genius on the one hand and at the same time to overcome their weakness on the other, so that the soul may be unfolded." Is there anything to hinder their overcoming their weakness in the spirit-world? Is it necessary to be re-embodied on earth to outgrow human weaknesses? "There is a difference between personality and individuality. The former changes and disappears, thank God! So do those family ties which are incompatible and unfortunate—they exist only as an experience."

Ah, Mr. Reincarnationist, that claim does not help you out. Reincarnation annihilates—not alone those family ties which are "incompatible and unfortunate," but it annihilates all the love ties and sacred relationships between parents and children and all other loved ones who are so dear to each other.

Could it be possible that these sacred relationships which are vouchsafed to all men and even given to brutes by the Great Cause of causes are only to be briefly enjoyed, with no other purpose or result than their ultimate destruction? Born of the holiest and most sacred relations of life only to end in disaster, disappointment and annihilation? First creating within us this great love of kindred and friends, then ruthlessly snatching them from us forever? If this were true could the Creator be a God of love? Could an orthodox Christian devil do a worse deed than to create conditions that imbues a mother with deepest affection for her child, or a child for its mother, and then, after a few years of this holy affection, take the child or mother away and re-embody her as another mother's child, with another personality, annihilating completely those sacred relationships forever, nevermore to be renewed; the mother lost to the child forever, the child lost to the mother forever?

IS THIS EARTH THE ONLY PLACE TO EDUCATE THE SPIRIT?

According to the teachings of Reincarnationists, this earth seems to be about the only place where primary experiences may be gained, and to be sure of getting them we come back and repeat them over and over again.

It may be Theosophic blasphemy to ask it, but we will risk it, and in all candor ask, could the spirit of man exist anywhere, in any sphere of life, without having experiences and without learning the lessons that experience teaches? If the answer is "No," we

will ask, why leave a world of progression, of spiritual possibilities, for one of forgetfulness to die again, to again enter spirit life?

According to Modern Spiritualism, the spirit-world is a world where opportunities for experiences are plentiful, and it is not necessary to live repeated lives of earth to gain experiences. This fact is shown in another article in which we discuss the question of little children developing in the spirit-world. (See pages 9 and 10.)

EXPERIENCE THE GREAT EDUCATOR.

When one forgets an experience must he not lose the education the experience gave him? Experience is the great teacher. When one has learned a lesson of life by experience he has no need to learn it again. If it must be learned over and over and forgotten again and again, what is the use of learning it at all?

The philosophy of Spiritualism teaches that all we learn or acquire in the experiences of this life we take with us into the next. If we do not learn the multiplication table in this life, death will not teach it to us and we will not be able to repeat it in the spirit-world until we have learned it there. If we have not learned to write in this life we will not be able to control a medium and write a spirit-message to our loved ones left behind, unless we learn to write after entering the spirit-world, which is quite possible to do, as that is a real and a natural world.

Spiritualism teaches, and proves by witnesses, that we retain all the knowledge we have acquired in this life on our entrance into spirit-life; that we enter there just as we leave here, knowing no more and knowing no less because of having passed through the process of dying; that we have left nothing of ourselves behind us but the physical body we had occupied here; that we are provided with a spiritual body which is adapted to our use in that realm, otherwise we are the same individuals after death as before. John Smith will be John Smith and no one else, though he will be better equipped for spiritual advancement in his new spiritual body than he was in his earthly body. Infinite opportunities await us all in the spiritual spheres. This being true, what is the use of being reincarnated, especially when there is no perceptible advancement manifested in the child nor in his maturer years which would distinguish the person who it is supposed has lived many lives of earth from one who has never been re-embodied?

TESTIMONY OF WISE SPIRITS.

According to the Spiritual Philosophy, and the reports of all communicating spirits, the spirit-world is a natural world and governed by natural law. The law of progression is manifested in everything there the same as it is in this world. The law of evolution

continues there and cause and effect are as potent there as here. Consequently spirits of men who leave this world with little spiritual development may and will eventually receive such unfoldment in that life. Little children entering that life without the benefit of an earthly experience grow in stature and in spirit, attend schools, colleges and other institutions of learning there. In short, they have all the facilities for advancement in education of the mind and spirit in that life and infinitely more than there is in this.

This world may be termed the Kindergarten of Eternity. It is used to start the human plants, all of whom are transplanted in the gardens of the summerland where conditions appear to be much better adapted to their needs and their unfoldment more perfect, and where they mature more completely. This being true, what is the need of reincarnation?

EVOLUTION IN SPIRIT LIFE.

We have a daughter in spirit life who never had the experience of the earthly life. In the thirty-six years of our daily communication with the spirit-friends we have seen this darling child grow to womanhood. From time to time she told us of her progress in school over there. Her development was as gradual from year to year as was that of our daughter now living on earth. She began speaking through Mrs. Sprague when she was a child and gradually developed in language, in mind, in reasoning powers, etc., just as other children on this plane of life do, until she became a beautiful and spiritually developed woman, whose intellectual development and spiritual culture is shown in her blessed spirit-messages. It does her old father's heart good to receive spirit-messages from this darling child of the spiritual spheres, through her dear mother as her medium.

Again we ask of the Reincarnationist, what is the need of reincarnation? It is not necessary, as the above facts plainly show. There are greater facilities for intellectual and spiritual unfoldment on that side of life than there is on this. It could not be otherwise, since that is a natural world of progress and evolution, one in which children gain as fine intellectual and spiritual unfoldment as well as physical growth and development as is gained here. This is the universal message of all communicating spirits and is thoroughly proven true in innumerable cases throughout the civilized world, and there is no need or necessity for reincarnation, because one develops the higher qualities of spirit in the spirit-world, which is nature's way.

Repeated incarnations could not accomplish a greater development than spirit-life has accomplished for our angel daughter, judging from the apparent development of those who claim to have lived many lives on earth.

All spirits teach that the unfoldment of spirit goes on in the spirit-world unceasingly, that there are no backward steps in progression, such as there would be in reincarnation if it were true. All, yes all, is progression, eternal progression in spirit-life. Not a single soul is lost in the supposed great maelstrom of a wholly theoretical dogmatism labeled "Reincarnation." Our darling spirit-daughter is saved to us and saved from such a fate, but not through the will of the so-called "Yogi," "Magi," or the desire of the self-styled and mythical "Mahatmas" who are said to inhabit the Himalaya Mountains, but who have thus far never shown themselves to the world. In spite of these teachings of re-embodiment, and through the laws of God's visible and invisible universe, our darlings are always our darlings, none are eternally lost in this terrible maelstrom of Theosophy named reincarnation.

Some Theosophists deplore the ignorance of Spiritualists because of their belief in spirit-communion. Spirits, they say, cannot return to earth excepting to enter the body of some babe about to be born. We would ask, is it easier to enter and take possession of the forming body of some unborn babe, or to enter the body of the father-to-be, than it is to control psychologically one who is already born and their faculties developed?

"Oh, consistency, thou art a jewel," and in the teachings of Theosophy thou art indeed "a pearl of great price," because thou art seldom if ever found there. Spiritualists also deplore the fact and pity those who are misled by the unreasonable and unprovable doctrines and dogmas of Theosophy.

The doctrine of reincarnation annihilates our loved ones, contradicts and condemns the true philosophy and science of Modern Spiritualism and blasts the sacred hopes of all true lovers of their own parents, children and friends. Spiritualism stands in the way of Theosophy as truth always obstructs the way of error, consequently certain Theosophists have sought to destroy Spiritualism a la the author of "The Great Psychological Crime."

I am thankful there is no proof of the truth of reincarnation, and I thank the spirit-world with the same measure of soulful feeling for the grand philosophy of Modern Spiritualism which they have given us, refuting such doctrine and tending to prove its falsity. To us the teachings of reincarnation is a soulless, unspiritual, unnatural and unprovable fad, resting on no proof whatever, and possessing nothing but assumption to bolster it up so far as has been shown to the world by its advocates. It is one more of those ancient myths handed down from our untutored and superstitious ancestors and is deserving of a place side by side with the doctrines of "Spirit Obsession," "Incarnate Gods," "Infallible Men," etc., and should land in the archives

of oblivion. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

ORIENTAL SPIRITS TEACH REINCARNATION.

Some Oriental spirits teach reincarnation, and so do some Orthodox Christian spirits teach Christianity, and for the same reasons.

These Oriental spirits do not outgrow their lifetime training and inherited beliefs quickly, though radical Christians sometimes do.

When it is considered that reincarnation is one of the fundamental tenets of the religion of the Orient that has been taught the Hindoo people for centuries, and that every child has inherited a belief in it from his ancestors for thousands of years, and that he enters spirit-life with the firm conviction of its truth, is it at all strange that he should, on returning to earth, teach it, since it is true that reincarnation is an open question in the spirit-world the same as it is in this world, it not having been scientifically established in either sphere of life?

Belief in a theory, be it ever so strong, is not proof of its truth. Spirits of the higher spheres, like the wisest and best of mortals, differ in their beliefs. Wise and good spirits, as well as great scientists, in this life sometimes advocate unprovable theories. They may be great in certain lines, possessed of much wisdom regarding certain subjects, and yet their theories may not prove to be correct.

In our more than a third of a century of active work in the fruitful field of Spiritualism we have never met a single medium who advocated the doctrine of reincarnation who did not have Oriental spirit-guides and teachers.

As has been said, the doctrine of reincarnation has been the central thought of the people of the Orient for ages. They have inherited this belief from generation to generation, and passing on to spirit-life they take with them the firm conviction of its truth. When such spirits return and communicate, some of them feel so sure of the truth of their belief that they teach it as absolute truth, although those Oriental spirits of a higher spiritual unfoldment do not hesitate to acknowledge that it is an unprovable theory, as the following facts will show.

EXPERIENCE WITH W. J. COLVILLE.

Several years ago at the Lily Dale (N. Y.) Spiritualist Camp Meeting, Mr. W. J. Colville, a world-wide speaker and author in the ranks of Spiritualism, and a teacher of reincarnation or re-embodyment, being the speaker of the day, asked for questions from the audience, or subjects upon which to base his discourse, and we wrote three questions for consideration by his spirit-teachers, as follows:

"To the Spirit Controls of the Speaker of the Afternoon:

Question No. 1—Did any spirit ever disappear from your sphere of spirit-life who could not be traced and found?"

When this question was read to him the medium readily answered it in the negative, saying it was an easy matter to trace any spirit and find him. He then explained why it was an easy matter to do so.

Question No. 2—Did any of the speaker's spirit-guides ever trace a spirit from his sphere of life in the spirit-world back to earth and find him inhabiting another physical body, reincarnated in the flesh?"

His reply was given promptly and the answer was "No."

"Question No. 3—Is the doctrine of reincarnation anything more than a theory?"

The speaker talked some time before answering this question, but finally said: "The doctrine of reincarnation is theoretical. There is no absolute proof of its truth that can be furnished to others. One must realize it within himself." (These may not be his exact words, but they give the exact thought he expressed.) The speaker then went on to show that there are evidences that indicate its truth, but admitted that these evidences were not absolute demonstrations of its truth.

Brother Colville was a believer in and an advocate of the doctrine of reincarnation or re-embodiment. His spirit-guides were wise and good souls, and they stated that no spirit had left their sphere that could not be traced; that they had never traced one and found him reincarnated in a human body; and that the doctrine of reincarnation is only a theory and is unprovable. Therefore, from the standpoint of Mr. Colville's spirit-teachers, reincarnation may or may not be true; even they do not surely know.

When it is considered that there are something like a thousand religions in the world, and each one differs from all the others, and their advocates and believers teach that their particular religion is the only true one, is it at all strange that spirits of persons believing these religions should differ in their beliefs after passing to spirit-life, especially so since they were sure they were right and all others were wrong when they were here? The same applies to a belief in reincarnation. Going through the process of dying does not impart all knowledge to one.

DO THEY REMEMBER LIVING BEFORE?

Some people think they remember living former lives upon the earth in other bodies and honestly think they are able to give some facts regarding their former earthly experience. Such people are

sincere in their belief, but the good spirits have explained this matter as follows: They say, "Such people are mediumistic to a certain degree; they are subject to mental impressions from spirits and possess a certain degree of subjective clairvoyance, consequently are subject to mental visions and impressions made on their consciousness by spirits." The following experience will give further explanation:

A CONVINCING PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

A spirit controlling the writer in a seance said to a gentleman: "Your belief in reincarnation is very strong. You appear to be all wrapped up in it. You think your own personal experiences are sufficient proof of its truth; all of which is very natural, but you have a misunderstanding of the facts in your experience. There is a strange-looking spirit standing by your side who has been your familiar spirit for many years. It is he who inspires your mind with so many beautiful thoughts, and he has revealed to you by mental impression many truths regarding this life and life in the spirit-world." After describing this spirit and giving other evidences of his personal presence, which the gentleman recognized and greatly enjoyed, the controlling spirit said: "This spirit-friend of yours represents himself as having been a cannibal king in earth life. He is only able to influence your mind on certain occasions, but has been unable to control you. He has impressed you with his personality and with some of his earthly memories and experiences and they have been so vivid and real to you that you think they were actual experiences of your own while inhabiting a former body in a former life on earth. You sincerely believe that you have experienced three separate reincarnations—once that you were a cannibal king, once a New York bootblack, and now you are Mr. C. W., a North Collins farmer.

"Instead of these two former incarnations, the spirit of the cannibal king and the spirit of the New York 'bootblack' have been to some extent your familiar spirits, and their vivid impressions made on your mind at times regarding their earthly experiences have caused you to think they are memories you retain of incidents occurring in former lives. When you are in a certain sensitive state of mind and these spirits are near you, their thoughts are reflected on your mind, and neither they nor you may be conscious of the fact. If you were more fully developed mediumistically, and better prepared to receive their influence and control, they would long ago have been able to have corrected your erroneous belief in the matter."

The recollection of events, etc., in the lives of spirit-attendants may be reflected upon the minds of mediumistic persons through the laws governing telepathy

and mind-reading, without either spirit or mortal knowing the fact. Many such thoughts of spirits find lodgment in the minds of sensitive people without their knowing the source from which they came. This is a fact that is certainly proven by the experiences of many persons, some of whom are not Spiritualists. We will record one of these experiences here, and this is sufficient to prove this claim, though many such testimonies might be given.

Thomas Paine, in his "Age of Reason," Part I, page 38, says: "There are two distinct classes of what are called thoughts; those that we produce in ourselves by reflection and the act of thinking, and those that come bolt into the mind of their own accord. I have always made it a rule to treat those voluntary visitors with civility. It is from them I have acquired almost all the knowledge I have."

Thomas Paine was not a Spiritualist, as there were none in his day; but he testifies to the fact of the impressibility of human mentalities by unseen intelligences, and his statements, given before Modern Spiritualism came to the world, corroborates the facts mentioned above. Had Thomas Paine lived in our day he would undoubtedly have been a Spiritualist and would probably have developed his mediumship farther.

No one can question the honesty of those who believe they remember incidents or experiences of some former lives. The above explanation easily accounts for the supposed memories of their experiences in former incarnations.

CORROBORATIVE TESTIMONIES.

The following testimonies in corroboration of the preceding explanation were published in the *Progressive Thinker* of March 24, 1917, in an article entitled "Reincarnation Tested by Reason" (by Ewing):

"Vincent N. Turvey, of Bournemouth, friend of the late Wm. T. Stead, says: 'I used to remember having been long ago a Persian magician, and later an Egyptian seer, and still later a Delaware Indian; but when I became clairvoyant I saw them to be not my remembrances, but spirit-guides. I say I know, because eight other clairvoyants have testified to their presence with me.'

"In the same line, W. J. Hull, in an editorial in the *Light of Truth* (March 30, 1901) says: 'My own experience has been that whenever I experience a sensation as if having lived before in a far-off country or different era, upon looking clairvoyantly I could see the spirit near me who had had these experiences. The result is a natural distrust of all such impressions.'"

The above facts effectually explain away the strongest evidence the Reincarnationists are able to produce in its favor.

If reincarnation is a fact in nature, as taught by Theosophists, then the sacred ties of love for mother and love of mother for child are lost in the future life. Our best beloved, those nearest and dearest to us, those we love so dearly that life would be a burden and a curse without them, would be eternally lost to us, *and this would be the awful fate of every one of the human race*, as each one's loved ones would, in order to progress, go and reincarnate, becoming some other mother's babe, to be loved in vain by her, as it had been by all former mothers of its many other incarnations. *Oh, the awfulness of this collossal blight upon the highest and holiest affections of the human soul!* Is it not more of a curse to the loving, tender-hearted and sorrow-afflicted human race than any teachings ever promulgated in the name of religion or of anything else?

Love is a spiritual attribute, quality or principle, and consequently must be eternal. Every soul is endowed with a love nature; therefore, love being a spiritual attribute, and eternal, its possessor must be immortal, and as the doctrine of reincarnation annihilates all love ties and relations, can it be true? We prefer to believe, until it is proven true, that true love can never die and that our loved ones are not annihilated.

IDENTITY LOST IN REINCARNATON.

Reincarnation annihilates individuality, destroys the most sacred relations of kindred and friends. Dear reader, under the blighting influence of reincarnation your mother may be re-embodied as someone else's child and she would be lost to you forever. Your children, bone of your bone, flesh of your flesh, spirit of your spirit, are nothing more to you, because they have become re-embodied in other families, becoming children of other parents, nevermore to know you again, and they never to know each other. Can you appreciate the horror of such teachings? If true, this doctrine would annihilate all there is in life worth living for. It is the most selfish belief, since one can live only for self, if self is all that survives the many incarnations. And even self survives only with all memory lost. All that identifies one is gone. There is nothing left by which to identify one. We earnestly pray that the human race may soon be relieved of this nightmare of ancient superstition.

REINCARNATIONISTS CONDEMN BELIEF IN HEREDITY BECAUSE IT ACCOUNTS FOR THINGS THEY USE IN TRYING TO PROVE REINCARNATION TRUE.

Mr. W. Q. Judge, Theosophic author and General Secretary American Section of the Theosophic Movement of the State of New York at the time, in a

speech delivered in Jamestown, N. Y., stated with great vehemence of utterance that *"there is nothing in heredity."* He also said: "If a six-year-old child plays a piano with the skill of a master musician, it is simply because she was a master of music in a former life. She did not inherit her musical talent from her ancestors, but acquired it by study and practice in a former incarnation."

Mr. Judge assumed to *know* that this was the case, but did not try to furnish a single proof of his assumption. He was a member of that cult which assumes everything, proves nothing, and demonstrates nothing; and if one cannot accept their conclusions he is "ignorant and undeveloped" and of course must live through many cycles of time and pass through numberless incarnations before he can reach the intellectual and spiritual plane that these self-appointed ministers of "divine wisdom" claim now to occupy. Oh, what collossal assumption, supreme bigotry, unequaled egotism is displayed by them!

Wise Spiritualists do not accept wholesale assumption as final proof of anything. They seek evidence and demand proof of every claim whether made by mortal or spirit. Therefore, they are prepared to testify in many cases like the one mentioned by Mr. Judge regarding the child musician. Such cases have come before the Spiritualists and on careful and painstaking investigation they have learned that the child who manipulated the piano with the "skill of a master" had inherited a highly developed faculty of music and had also inherited the spiritual faculty of mediumship in a high degree, and because of these two faculties being so well developed, a master musician from the spirit-world was enabled, and did inspire the child to produce the music with a "master hand." This has been proved again and again, and may be demonstrated many times more in the future by Modern Spiritualism. Spiritualism proves its claims, Theosophy *never* does. And here is one more of the Theosophic claims of the proof of reincarnation exploded by the revelations of Modern Spiritualism.

In his book "The Ocean of Theosophy," Mr. W. Q. Judge makes a statement and contradicts it on the next page, as follows:

Page 115 he says: "The claim of mediums to hold communion with the spirits of the dead is baseless."

Immediately following this statement he says: "The Mahatma, a being who has developed all his powers and is free from illusion, can go into the devachanic" (spiritual) "state and then communicate with the Egoes (spirits) there."

Again, page 116, he says: "Sometimes also the hypersensitive and pure medium goes into this state and then holds communication with the Egoes" (spirits) "there. But it is rare and certainly will not take place with the general run of mediums who trade for money."

This is one more of the multitude of insults to mediums and Spiritualists from that source of "Divine wisdom" and "brotherly love" cult called Theosophy.

Blavatskan Theosophy was originated by a few Spiritualists who could not rule in Spiritualism, as Modern Spiritualism has no popes. They changed many words used by Spiritualists, evidently so as not to be accused of borrowing ideas from Spiritualism. Note in the above quotation from one of their officials and authors, he substitutes the word "Egoes" for "spirits" and "devachonic" for "heavenly" or "spiritualistic."

REINCARNATION RETROGRESSION.

The filthy worm builds his coffin weaving his beautiful cocoon around his body and dies to this world. In due time he is resurrected and reincarnated in a beautiful body. He has progressed from a filthy, crawling worm into a beautiful butterfly with wings, and he now navigates the air and sports in the sunshine, thus showing his appreciation of his new environment.

This phenomenon is typical of man in the mortal and of his condition attained through death on his arrival in the spirit realm. In this plain but wonderful physical phenomenon Nature gives man certain promise of progression and a better life after death. Does nature in any of her multitudinous forms of manifestation produce as clear a demonstration proving the retrogression of a life back into its former incarnation as this manifestation gives of the progression of a life to higher and better conditions? *The butterfly has never been seen to bury itself in a cocoon and then become resurrected in the form of a worm.* This would be retrogression, and retrogression is not a normal process of law in nature. Nature is certainly progressive in her processes. Worms reincarnate as butterflies, but never go back and reincarnate as worms? Progression is proved by worm life.

Does the chick go back into the eggshell? No such phenomena has thus far been proven, and no one of sane mind has advocated this particular phase of reincarnation, notwithstanding it is as likely to be true and seems to stand an equal chance of being proven true as does the Theosophic doctrine of the reincarnation of man.

Would it not be a sorry sight to see a Shakespere, a Socrates, a Newton, a McKinley, or any other intelligent human being from the spirit-world, hanging around from day to day watching for an opportunity to leave his high state of refinement, education, culture and spiritual attainment, all of which has been acquired by years and years of labor and struggle, trying to get back into baby life? Think of such a

spirit-intelligence leaving the great and grand opportunities for still greater spiritual attainment, which as Spiritualism teaches, awaits all men in the spirit-world; leaving all these grand opportunities to come back to earth to be re-embodied as a helpless little babe, then forgetting all he ever knew and all he ever had been; forgetting all, ALL that he had acquired in a lifetime of earth, as well as all of his experiences and acquirements in the spirit-world; forsaking everything, that he might begin life again on earth as a babe just to learn again the same lessons he had learned a half century or a century before, or if Theosophic reincarnation were true, those lessons he might have learned over and over again *ad infinitum*, centuries and centuries ago. What profit could the experience of babe life be to him? Is there a single reasonable excuse for such an act? Since progression in spirit-life is an established fact, there can be no necessity for such retrogression.

So long as reincarnation remains only a theory without proof or demonstration, in consideration of the foregoing facts the writer, in using his reason, is forced to reject the belief in it as taught by Theosophists and also by some Spiritualists. But we are still open to conviction and if, in the evolution of the race, it should be discovered and scientifically proven that reincarnation is true, as Modern Spiritualism has been scientifically proven to the leading scientists of the world, we would be among the first to accept such scientific proof of it, and would accept it gladly, because we believe that the universe, visible and invisible, is safe in the hands of Infinite Intelligence, and Nature's undeviating laws will continue to carry out, through its never-failing purpose, what is best for all in their spiritual progression. Therefore, we must believe that if reincarnation *is* true it is right. If it is not true, belief in it will never make it true. As the matter with us now stands, we believe the doctrine is a collossal mistake, an unprovable theory, with no purpose or reasonable object in view, with no spiritual possibilities to come out of its multitudes of supposed re-embodiments, with no foundation in fact, with no regard for human affections, human sympathies and the sacred ties of love of mother and child and all kindred and friends.

IF LINCOLN WAS REINCARNATED.

If the great Emancipator, Abraham Lincoln, were to be reincarnated he must leave behind the exalted spiritual and intellectual development to which he has attained. He must lay it all down and leave it entirely. Then on entering the newly formed or forming body of a babe he must be born into this world again, *minus* all the knowledge, wisdom and grand spiritual unfoldment that he possessed as Abraham Lincoln; and plus nothing. He must even relinquish the name by which he is known, loved and

revered throughout the civilized world, and with it goes all the mental, moral and spiritual attainment that made him the great and beautiful character that he was. All that reincarnation would leave of the great Lincoln would be the records of his accomplishments and the memories retained by the unnumbered millions of his admirers who survive him; and to them only for a time, for they too must all be reincarnated and swallowed up in the silence of reembodied forgetfulness. All that there was of the great Lincoln must be engulfed in oblivion. What an awful, AWFUL thing to contemplate!

In the meantime, that which *was* Lincoln is opening his eyes to the same old world he once impressed so deeply with his personality and his individuality; but he does not now know anything about it. Perhaps one hour ago he was in full possession of all his faculties, but the sudden change *from angelhood to baby-hood* may have robbed him of all that made him Abraham Lincoln. The transformation from a wise spirit to an ignorant babe is complete and may have taken place in the short space of a few minutes. Who knows? Does anybody know?

But if this is true, Lincoln's wonderful life with all its experiences are to him, at least, gone forever and he is starting out on a new career. After he is born again he must be fed, bathed, nursed and kept in good health by the best of care. He must be named, and of course his name will be changed. He may be named "William," and his new parents' names being "Smith," his name will be "William Smith" and he may be called "Billy" for short.

Everyone who sees him tells his new mamma that he is a pretty baby and very bright. His new mother is proud of *her* babe, even though she doesn't know that he is a remnant of the Great Emancipator, Abraham Lincoln. Think of it, kind reader, nothing left of this great character, this wonderful specimen of the greatest development of human power, goodness and wisdom, robbed of all by this detestable doctrine of the heathen. This dear mother in her innocence—in her ignorance, according to Theosophy—goes on loving her darling baby boy, never dreaming that after she has raised him and he has finished the life of "Billy" he will go off and become some other mother's baby boy or girl with a new name, perhaps "Teddy," "Jimmy" or "Sally"—we cannot tell just what the new name or sex will be, there is so much of mystery and uncertainty surrounding the theory. And so she goes on caring for him who was one of the greatest Presidents of the United States, but who is now her "Billy" boy, tickling him under the chin to make him laugh, changing his soiled clothing, etc., and doing the thousand and one other deeds of a loving mother for the next few years, enjoying every sacrifice on her part because she thinks "Billy" is her babe, her *very own* baby boy.

This new mother enjoys life with her babe. She kisses his head when he bumps it, and watches him night and day, suffering pain and sorrow when he is ill. She is his guardian angel at all times. She walks the floor with little "Billy" in her arms night after night during his illness until her aching limbs and tired form almost refuses to go further, and still she keeps up the baby lullaby and holds the helpless little darling close to her breast, suffering anguish of soul when there is doubt of his recovery.

But for what purpose is all this trial and trouble placed upon this poor mother? The Theosophic answer is that she may work out her Karma and that the great soul of Abraham Lincoln may have one more babyhood experience and learn over again the lessons that babyhood teaches, little indeed though it be.

As "Billy" grows older and injures himself at play she ministers to him, eases his pain and comforts him. Being a boy, he goes barefoot at times and consequently has sore toes, stone bruises, etc., incident to boyhood, which cause him to suffer painfully, and the new mother suffers with her dear little Linc— no! no! with her "Billy." *Lincoln is no more.*

Well, "Billy" grows and is soon large enough to go to school, and he that was the Great Lincoln learns his "A, B, C's." Then begins the long routine of the school of life and he lives over again in years of hard work the varied experiences of other years. All this for he who was the Great Lincoln, but who is only little "Billy Brown" now. HE LEARNS LINCOLN'S GREAT GETTYSBURG SPEECH IN SCHOOL AND ADMIRES IT GREATLY, NEVER DREAMING THAT HE HIMSELF, IN A FORMER INCARNATION, WAS ITS AUTHOR. OH, HOW WONDERFUL (?).

Is it worth while to trace the development of this little child further as he grows to manhood, middle age, old age, experiencing another earthly life and again dying, to be re-embodied again, to repeat the same routine and to forget this "Billy Brown" personality and all others, as he has forgotten being Lincoln? The fear of death is not in the least abated by the many experiences in dying, because no remembrance of this experience is retained. What good could come out of such successive embodiments?

Oh, what a painful spectacle this heathen doctrine of reincarnation presents to a logical and scientific mind, especially so when it is contrasted with the grand and wholesome doctrine of Evolution! And this leads us after years of study, investigation and deliberation to ask, is not the doctrine of reincarnation the supreme head of all inconsistencies concentrated in one stupendous, unprovable, illogical, unreasonable and dogmatic superstition? We are still waiting with a mind open to conviction for one single proof of its truth.

EVEN MUMMIES FAIL TO DISCLOSE.

The preservation of human bodies as mummies was born of the belief in reincarnation and a physical resurrection, so in our investigation of the subject of reincarnation we have visited the mummies placed on exhibition in various places, but the largest collection we have seen was at the World's Fair held in Chicago in 1893. There we saw many mummies. There were baby mummies, children mummies, women mummies, gentlemen mummies, grandmas, grandpas, uncles, aunts and cousin mummies, for all we know. These were real mummies, because the attendants told us they had been dead between three and four thousand years.

Having been told some years before by a Reincarnationist that in a former incarnation I was Joseph the son of Jacob, I naturally felt drawn toward those mummies, because the last chapter and the last verse of Genesis states that "they embalmed Joseph." Now, those were Egyptian mummies on exhibition, and Joseph having died and his body having been embalmed in Egypt, in the year 1688 B. C.—according to the Bible chronology—which would be 3,605 years since it occurred, and as these were Egyptian mummies and between three and four thousand years old, there might be a possibility of meeting my own mummy in that splendid ancient group. Of course I did not accept the statement as being certainly true that I was originally Joseph, the governor of Egypt, for whom Jacob, his father, made the coat of many colors because he loved him more than all his other children; yet I wished to learn if reincarnation is true, and if the mummies could throw some light on the subject I was anxious to get it.

I felt attracted to these mummies, but my wife could not bear them. She would not tolerate them at all; so I told her to visit the other exhibits while I examined this one. She returned before I had concluded my investigations and I sent her away again. This happened a number of times, when she finally refused to go again without me and she would not stay there with me. I told her this was a great opportunity which I truly appreciated; that these mummies were three or four thousand years old. To which she replied: "I think there is no question about their being very old, their smell plainly indicates it. Come, now, let's go and see the Fair." So I felt called upon to forego further pleasure in this direction.

ARE THESE OUR ANCESTORS OR OUR OWN MUMMIES?

I had spent about two hours with these bodies that had been laid away prepared to last until the resurrection day. I had looked into their staring faces and earnestly sought to recognize first one, then another of them as being one of the bodies I had occupied in some former life. I was unable to discover a single

clue that might lead to the discovery of Joseph's and my mummy among them, and reluctantly postponed further investigation in that direction among that stately group.

Not knowing but I might have passed to spirit-life at that particular time as a babe, I had investigated the baby mummies, seeking for something that would identify my mummy, but found nothing. I then interviewed the lady mummies, looking for some defect of body or some peculiarity of the physical form by which to identify it as one I had occupied in the long ago, but not one clue to encourage my search did I find.

In my present incarnation I had the misfortune to lose the end of the forefinger of my right hand, and I was hopeful that some such accident might have left its mark on those ancient forms and also left its impress upon my memory so that I would be able to identify some one of those bodies as one I had occupied in ancient days.

If it is true that I was Joseph, the son of the patriarch Jacob of the Bible, I cannot now remember how I looked at that time. I have certainly forgotten my personal appearance if I had one in that incarnation, and after critically examining these ancient human bodies I found no sign, evidence, or clue to the mystery that I could recall or my memory could recognize.

I reviewed the mummies once more in the hope of finding some relative of other days or some once familiar face, but could recognize no friend of mine of those ancient times. My search was not crowned with success, and I attribute the cause to one of four things, namely, either I could have had no relations with those particular mummies; or my present memory does not retain the things of that former life; or I had not yet been blessed—or cursed—with a former life; or there is no truth in the doctrine of reincarnation. These four propositions may all be true. We do not know; but we are inclined to think they are.

ARE WE OUR OWN ANCESTORS?

Are these the mummies of our ancestors? They cannot be if reincarnation *is* true, because they are the bodies formerly occupied by the people of this generation, forms which we discarded three or four thousand years ago, and we greatly err in calling them our ancestors. In fact, *we are our own ancestors if reincarnation proves to be true.* Of course this somewhat complicates matters, but that is of no consequence when considering any matter from the standpoint of Theosophy, because Theosophy receives its "God wisdom" "from the land of child marriage, the perpetual seclusion of women, the burning of widows on the funeral pile, and the caste of Brahminical priesthood," and of course it should be true (?).

TESTIMONY OF ANCIENT SPIRITS.

In our experience we have come in contact with spirits who claim to have lived on earth thousands of years ago. They tell us of their many years of experience in spirit-life, but never mention having lived more than one life on earth. Why have they not reincarnated in all those thousands of years if reincarnation is so necessary and so helpful in one's progression? They remember their one earthly life; why do they not remember other lives if they have lived them? Thousands of years in spirit should develop that memory, if time is to do it.

TRUTH MAN'S SAVIOR.

"The Truth Shall Make You Free" (Jesus).

I've met with mummies, quite a number,
And earnestly have sought to know
If one was mine; and filled with wonder,
These interviews could not forego;
And speaking to these long-time dead,
In spirit unto each I said:

"Are you my mummy, or are you not?
If so, my own I have forgot.
If you were mine in ages flown,
To me that fact is now unknown.
To know the truth would much avail,
Truth makes men free, it cannot fail."

To me no word these mummies said,
No proof I found among these dead;
And if such form had once been mine,
I did not prove it at this time.
In searching earth as well as heaven
No evidence to me was given.

Facts furnish proof of truths that be,
We're seeking facts from day to day;
Truth is man's savior; all may see
Theories oft lead men astray.
Where reason rules, error's blighted,
Truth is found and wrong is righted.

REINCARNATION TESTED BY REASON.

A splendid article on "Reincarnation Tested by Reason," published in the *Progressive Thinker* of March 24, 1917, signed "By Ewing," contains so many good things that we will quote from it quite freely. Goethe is quoted as saying, "The greatest happiness is personality," and as asking the question: "What becomes of the personality if we are to vibrate back and forth, taking upon us new personalities and new ties?"

The article quotes Prof. A. R. Wallace, the great English scientist, as follows: "We think it was Wallace who made the point that the spirit and the spirit-body is the man, and is permanent and not a point or atom that can be transplanted from one body to another; and he asks what has become of the myriads of spirit-bodies in the next condition if reincarnation is true." If Theosophy is true, would not their "Yogis," "Mahatmas" and "Adepts" each have "astral bodies" to burn, since they have been reincarnated so many times?

TESTIMONY OF DR. J. M. PEEBLES.

"Dr. J. M. Peebles, as reported in an address given in Melbourne, Australia, says: 'Reincarnation, or re-births back into fleshly bodies, pertains to poesy, imaginations and the speculative childhood of the dead, buried past; and it is important to note that it is not taught in the inspired Vedas, the Zend Avesta or the Jewish scriptures.'

"'It was a hypothesis invented about Gautama Buddha's time and is popular among the most ignorant and superstitious of the races peopleing Nepaul, Burmah, Thibet, Korea and India, eighty-five per cent of whom can neither read or write.' * * * 'A Hindoo scholar in Calcutta told me spirits were perching in trees and hovering like flies in the atmosphere over India for further experiences.'

"'Reincarnation is not based upon one well-established fact of science or nature. Blossoms do not return back to buds, the butterfly to his crysalis, nor do birds re-enter the shells from which they were hatched. Reincarnation is opposed to evolution.'

"'Revolving back from spirit-life into the imprisonment of the flesh is exactly the reverse of evolution. It is retrogression with lapses of consciousness.'"

This article continues as follows: "Dr. Peebles then related how he had been told by reincarnationists that 16,000 years ago he was an adept summering on the Ganges, next he was an Egyptian priest, then he was Habakkuk, and returned to earth as Herodotus, and again as Origen, and still later as Peter the Hermit. 'But,' said he, 'admitting all this to be true, what is the benefit of it? I have not the least memory of these experiences, and upon the whole I seem to be "evoluting" downwards, for now I am only plain, hard-working J. M. Peebles. * * * Is God so niggardly, so narrowly inconsequential in His purposes, that there can be no experiences except those gained on this little planet?' The Doctor denies that it is necessary for human beings to pass through all earthly experiences, or that it is necessary for a man to 'lie in the gutter to know how to enjoy temperance and purity of life.'"

The following by the author of this article is to the point, and like the other quotations, is unanswerable. He says: "Let me intrude here another personal observation: For twenty years I was a persistent investigator. I sought high and low for those who

could give tangible evidences of the continuity of life, and my experiences would fill a small book. But mark this, I was never able to connect with a Theosophist who could demonstrate a fact. And I would ask, how many readers of this article ever got anything but argument from our Theosophical friends? However, through psychics and Spiritualists, evidence for the persistence of the personality was finally so cumulative and convincing as to appear conclusive. And there was not one of the communications from an invisible source that reached me that did not lay the ghost of reincarnation when this question was presented. As one aptly put it, '*There is no falling out of the ranks, no numerous sudden disappearances that would be in evidence if reincarnation was one of nature's processes.*'" (Italics ours.) "Now let me ask, How is it that the advocates of reincarnation, who seem unable to demonstrate, assume to know? And how can they expect to seriously combat the opposing views of multitudes who are demonstrating? Reason, as I see it, not only opposes the dogmas of reincarnation and Karma, but it is not proven. In fact, physicists declare that by its very nature it cannot be proven, and of the really great scientists like Crookes, Wallace, Lodge, et al., who have accepted the spiritual hypothesis, there is not one that I know of who does not reject reincarnation. Personally I feel that if people were as familiar with the phenomena as the Spiritualists and psychic students, there would be fewer reincarnationists, for a little familiarity with the experiences of psychics and psychometrists would disclose the foundation for many of the so-called visions of memories of previous incarnations.

"I know a number of well-meaning people, neither Theosophists or Spiritualists, who have occasional experiences that seem to arouse memories that do not belong to them. But my reading and personal experiences long ago met and solved for me this aspect of the question. For instance, I was visiting a Mrs. Johnson (a fine sensitive, now deceased), when a Chinaman called with her week's laundry. To his dismay, she assailed him in rapidly spoken Chinese for something neither she nor I understood. She did not know a word of the Chinese language. It would probably be easy for a reincarnationist to believe that she was formerly a Mongolian, but her friends knew she was being used by many nationalities. An ancient piece of jewelry aroused such vivid memories of archaic experiences in another sensitive that if she had not been aware of her psychrometic powers she could easily have believed it to have been evidence of a former life."

SIR WILLIAM COLEMAN.

Continuing, this article says: "Sir William Coleman, the eminent scholar and writer, in *Two Worlds* (May 29, 1903) says: 'India is the fountain-head of

the doctrines of reincarnation and Karma. For nearly 3,000 years the masses in that land have accepted these dogmas. It is well to note the effects upon the Hindus of the domination of these two doctrines.' After quoting Editor J. J. Morse's observation that 'there was no nation that could present such a spectacle of degradation side by side with evidences of past greatnesses as the Hindus,' Coleman goes on to say: 'The doctrines of reincarnation and Karma tend to destroy sympathy and fellow-feeling. Whatever distresses a person may endure, they are regarded as the just and necessary consequences of his misconduct in a former birth. "Why," says the Hindu, "shall I discontent myself about the inevitable, and why should I, by trying to lessen suffering, interfere with fate's stern and just decree?" In the same way no credit is accorded to the man who, by a course of industry and virtue, improves his position and raises his social standing. This, again, is merely the inevitable recompense of the virtues of a previous birth. * * * A man may be ever so vicious, a thief, a murderer, but why censure him? He was fated to be what he is; he may be ever so moral and upright, but why commend him? He was doomed to be such; it was written beforehand on the forehead of each by Advishta, the Unseen, or Fate, what each should be. (Vaughan, Trident, Crescent and Cross, 93, 94.) In the popular sacred book of the Hindus, the Mahabharata (Shanti Parvan, Sect. CCXIII; P. C. Roy's translation, Pt. LXXII, 147), it is taught that our children are the result of the acts of previous lives, they are like the parasitical vermin on one's body, and one possessed with wisdom should feel no regard for them; that as one casts off those vermin that are called children, who, although regarded as one's own, are not one's own in reality! 'This diabolical doctrine,' says Coleman, 'is the logical outcome of the dogmas of reincarnation and Karma.' He then points out the horrible condition of the widows in India as also due to the same dogmas, and quotes from Edwin Arnold's article in the *North American Review* (February, 1892), as follows: 'The universal Hindu belief is that so great a calamity as the death of her husband could only befall any hapless child or woman because of some great offense in a previous existence, and that patient solitude is the right expiation.' Coleman continues: 'The 70,000 child widows in India under nine years of age are regarded as a cursed class by all grades of caste. They are shunned and isolated, never allowed in the parlor or front of the house, and if by accident one is seen by a man as he sets out in the morning to engage in business he turns back, regarding it as unlucky. She is ill-treated by her own family and hated by the parents of her botrothed or husband, though she may never have seen him. So miserable are the lives of many of them that they would prefer to die on the funeral pyre with the dead bodies of their husbands; this being denied them, many resort to

suicide as the only escape. The same applies to the two million adult widows in many ways. They are never allowed to remarry.' * * * Now, why is she, especially the child, thus treated? Because she was a bad woman in a previous incarnation, or her husband or betrothed would not have died. His death was the working out of her Karma, and she, poor, innocent child, had to suffer. * * * And this doctrine of reincarnation, which is responsible for all this degradation, misery, wretchedness and suicides, some misguided people wish to cram into the minds of the partially emancipated women of Europe and America."

SHARAT CHANDRA DAS.

"Sharat Chandra Das, who twice visited Thibet, thus testifies to the influence which the belief in reincarnation has exercised upon the Thibetans: 'Consequent upon this belief the priesthood has constructed elaborate works on the art of divination and necromancy, based on astrology. The astrologer has a busy trade in Thibet, as he is consulted at the occurrence of birth, marriage, sickness, death, etc. A father ascertains from the astrologer what the new child was before it came into the world. The sick man consults him as to what he will be after death. The bridegroom ascertains from him if his marriage with a particular maiden will be auspicious, whether they were unfriendly to each other in their former lives. For instance, if the astrologer declares the bridegroom was a tiger in his former birth, and his intended bride a buck, the marriage negotiations are at once dropped; but if it is found that she had been a lioness, religious services are conducted to induce her tutelary deities to soften her temper and the marriage is fixed upon.' "

Coleman quotes teachers as declaring that adepts reincarnate on earth sometimes by taking possession of the body of a child or adult whose Karma has been exhausted, and asks what becomes of the ego of the child or adult thus supplanted. He closes to assert: "That it is by reincarnation alone that exact justice and full equality can be experienced by all, is shallow sophistry. * * * As the entire animal world experiences similar inequalities * * * what compensation has been received by the myriads of poor creatures who have suffered and died during the many millions of years of the geological history of the earth?"

REV. MINOT J. SAVAGE.

"The eloquent divine, the Rev. Minot J. Savage, declared in one of his sermons that 'reincarnation seems a hopeless kind of doctrine any way you take it; and the curious fact is—and this, I confess, does puzzle beyond expression—all the Hindus, all the

Buddhists (twice over as many Christians as there are on the face of the earth) are engaged with their utmost power—all their philosophies, all their religions exist—*to the one end of getting rid of being reincarnated*' (italics ours), 'while here we are picking it up as though it were a new find and something delightful. The one object of all their religions is to escape reincarnation. Before we take it up too readily, would it not be worth while to find why they are working so hard to get rid of it?"

EX-U. S. SENATOR R. A. DAGUE.

"From an article by Hon. R. A. Dague in the *Progressive Thinker* of December, 1907, I condense the following trenchant questions: 'If, as claimed, Madam Blavatsky has reincarnated, did she pass through the father of the child whose body she now inhabits? If not, and children can be born independent of a male, then could not the world be populated by females alone? And if this is so, what kind of a life was in the body of the child before the Madam entered? Did the child have a soul, and what became of it? And was not the Madam an intruder? What right had she to seize the body of another? If, as Theosophists say, all souls started even, then did a small number outgeneral the majority by capturing the first few hundreds of available bodies and thus get a good start ahead of all the others because there were not enough bodies to go around? If so, was that a "square deal"? And are these "hustlers," they who have attained to the high stations in this world and the next, and are those of us who are tried and oppressed now suffering because there were not bodies enough to go around and we did not hustle hard enough for bodies? Again, if as some reincarnationists teach, a soul can acquire no knowledge or wisdom except by inhabiting a physical body, does that not contract the schools of infinite intelligence to but one grade, and that one a primary? Is the universe a vacuum where spirits hover over the earth waiting to dive into the body of some infant about to be born? Has Madam Blavatsky and the rest of us been doing that throughout all the past eternity?"

In a very candid and scholarly article under the same heading, "Reincarnation Tested by Reason," published in the *Progressive Thinker* of May 12, 1917, Mr. Theo. Flammer replies to "Ewing's" article, using logic, science, philosophy, etc., displaying his side of the question beautifully, but he fails utterly to present a single proof of the truth of reincarnation.

Many reincarnationists assume to know that it is true, but when asked for the proof they bring forward these exploded theories and still call them proof. If it is true, and they KNOW it is true, why cannot its advocates go before the scientists and demonstrate its truth as Spiritualists demonstrate the truth of Spiritualism before them?

One of Mr. Flammer's claims as proof of reincarnation, as published in the article above mentioned, follows. He says: "Now let us illustrate. We meet a person say thirty years of age, who plays beautifully upon the piano. We immediately and logically conclude that this person has studied music for some time, under excellent opportunities. This is so self-evident that we do not inquire of the artist whether our surmise is correct, but simply ask him where he studied and under what masters. We know a person must have had years of study and continuity of thought from the simplest lessons to the most profound studies to reach such a degree of perfection.

"Next we meet a child of four years of age. He plays beautifully upon the piano. Not as brilliantly as the first one, because of his tiny hands. But he has the interpretation, the expression, the time, and, not only that, but he composes and knows more in a minute about music than the person of maturer years in his lifetime. The prodigy we speak of is Mozart. Now, reason tells us, just as in the first illustration, that a person who has acquired such efficiency must have had years of study and a continuity of thought upon the subject from the simplest lessons to the most profound contemplation. But the prodigy has been on earth but four years. We know he has the education. He could not have acquired it in the present. There is absolutely no alternative. It is his past experience which has endowed him. Somewhere he has wrestled with difficulties and conquered them. It is the only way to achieve things. A continuous striving of conscious effort. He could not have done this in the four years of earthly existence. It logically follows that there must have been a prior existence. The continuity of thought is in evidence, inasmuch as he takes up his music just where he left off in his former embodiment, and stamping it with his individuality, flatly contradicts the writer, who says the continuity of thought is denied the so-called reincarnated being."

The writer of this article seems to think he has settled this question in favor of reincarnation. However, we cannot accept his conclusions so long as there are other and better explanations for the phenomena produced by a musical prodigy. Modern Spiritualism has proved again and again that children, and adults as well, who play the piano without having studied music or taken lessons, were controlled or inspired by spirit musicians. In many cases the spirits have communicated and given the proof of their identity and proven themselves the real authors of the music. This fact upsets Mr. Flammer's theory completely, for this being true in many proven cases, it may be true in his case. As one real proof of the truth of reincarnation this claim is also a total failure.

From the standpoint of Spiritualism, the explanation is clear, and briefly stated is as follows: The prodigy is born with musical faculties highly developed. He also has inherited mediumistic qualities,

and the spirit "master musician" who, as Brother Flammer says, "must have had years of study and continuity of thought upon the subject," did have it, and "the continuity of thought is in evidence"; but it is the spirit-influence that is manifesting through the child medium producing the music he had learned to produce "in a former life," namely, his earthly life. So here we bid good-bye to this claim of proof of reincarnation.

In another article published in the *Progressive Thinker* of another date, entitled "Phrenology Does Not Disprove Re-embodyment," Mr. Flammer in speaking of Mozart, the great musical prodigy, says: "The moment he laid his tiny hands on the keyboard, his fingers remembered their companionship with those ivory keys, and they 'wandered idly' until 'they struck one chord of music like the sound of a great amen!'" * * * Further on he says: "The fingers remember their familiarity with instruments played upon long, long ago, and often awaken reminiscences of a previous existence." If this is true, does it not prove that fingers have a better memory than the owner of them? The fingers remembered their former life, but the great musical prodigy himself had no remembrance of having lived before. Is that it? Is this the kind of logic on which the doctrine of reincarnation is based?

KARMA THE HELL OF THEOSOPHY.

This world is the hell of the Theosophic reincarnationist. The man who committed evil deeds in some former life is reincarnated in this life, where he must suffer the consequences of his wicked acts committed in that other life. Theosophists declare that suffering is not inflicted upon the sinner as punishment for his ancient sin, but he must suffer as a natural consequence, or as the result of that sin. This may be better than the hell of orthodoxy which teaches that his suffering is for punishment for his sin; but, if the sinner's suffering is the result of his having sinned, and he has no recollection of having committed the sin and is ignorant of the fact that he is suffering the consequences of that sin, what good can the suffering do the poor, ignorant, long-ago sinner, since he does not know that his suffering was caused by it?

Theosophists place the sinner in a previous life where he commits his sin and then he is made to suffer the consequences of that sin in this life, while Christians locate the sinner in this world and punish him in the next one. One does not know himself why he should be made to suffer so and the other knows all about it. In this particular, orthodox Christianity seems to be in the lead of Theosophy. It is better to know the cause of one's suffering. One suffers temporarily in this life, the other suffers eternally in the next one. Neither of these claims have ever been scientifically proven, yet they are apparently as sincerely believed by the Christian as by the Theosophist.

One author is quoted as saying: "Those who believe in a reincarnating entity support their theory by

claiming it is necessary to the equalization and balance of justice. They say if a man is evil he will be born again into this world to suffer for his misdeeds. When they see a good man suffering they say he is suffering in judgment for sins committed in a previous life. Since one has no recollection of the sins he committed in a former life, what good does his suffering in this life bring to him? It can have no tendency to reform him, and if he is a good man now he needs no reforming. But, Theosophy says, he is suffering the consequences of his sin. If so, what does it benefit him if he doesn't know it? If a man is fated to work out his Karma without knowing it, then man is a creature of fate. Karma is but another name for fate, and believers in Karma must be fatalists."

With Karma, like most other doctrines of Theosophy, the farther one goes in his investigations of it the less one knows about it, because there is no proof to substantiate it. Nothing to sustain or support the theory is furnished.

Theosophists say that Karma is not for punishment for sin, that it is the consequences of sin, and we ask in all candor, does not the suffering caused by one's sin in a former life punish the sinner? If his sin causes the pain of Karma, the sinner is punished, is he not?

R. A. DAGUE ANSWERS THEOSOPHIST.

We will here quote freely from an article by Hon. R. A. Dague as published in the *Progressive Thinker*, of Chicago, Ill., of September 15, 1917, as follows:

"There are some Spiritualists who are also Theosophists and believe in reincarnation, and there are two or more schools of reincarnationists. That is a *theory* only, and its disciples can indulge in all sorts of wild guessings and not be 'turned out' of church for heresy.

"F. A. Bruce, Theosophist and reincarnationist, in an article in the *Indianapolis Sentinel*, warns all Spiritualists of the danger of having anything to do with Spiritualism. He admits that there are bhutas, or 'shells,' or ghosts that produce phenomena at Spiritualistic seances, but they have little or no intelligence. He says all spirit manifestations are produced by a 'senseless but energetic energy,' which at death left the physical body of some animal or human, and will soon rot and be absorbed by nature. I quote his own words, as follows:

"'Of course the ghost is merely an aggregate energy and etheric matter. It is senseless, having no mind, and is automatic in its action. * * * Trooping around us, invisible to ordinary eyes, are myriads of these senseless bhutas responding to our passions, our loves, fears, hates, and thus receiving from us the impulse to re-enact the dramas, the tragedies, and even the charities which are a part of their memories. These bhutas are the "spirits" which are called up in the seance rooms and which produce the little bits of true manifestation found there.

"'Swarming in the lower strata of the etheric atmosphere of our globe are a class of "lives" which are ever seeking to enter the bodies of men. These are the disease-bringers, the "destroyers," the "larvae" produced by the brutality of man. These "larvae" are the graveworms of the etheric graveyard where the bhutas slowly decay. They are generated from the etheric bodies as graveworms are generated from bodies of clay. They infest the bhutas which are in process of disintegration on the etheric (astral) plane and use them as the means to reach physical man. Attend the seance. Call up your departed friend. It comes, a half-rotted, larvae-covered thing. It responds to your impulses automatically, because old memories are aroused and repeated. It drifts near you. A small pimple on your cheek filled with prurient matter attracts the larvae. It fastens upon you. Henceforth you are shadowed by this loathsome thing and you wonder why you feel sick.'

"DAGUE'S ANSWER.

"If Mr. Bruce is correct in his study, then Spiritualists should lose no time in abandoning their 'delusions.' They should make haste to join the orthodox church, flee to Theosophy, or take to the woods. But before I do any of these things I will venture to ask Mr. Bruce a few questions and indulge in making a few comments.

"Is his theory of death, 'bhutas' and 'half-rotted ghosts' based on fact or speculation, theory and guessings? If on truth, how did he gain a knowledge of those facts? If on theory and guessings, does he think that millions of Spiritualists will accept his guessings against the recorded testimony of Abraham, and Moses, and Elijah, and Daniel, and all the ancient prophets, as well as Socrates, Joan of Arc, and Buddha, and Jesus, and Peter, and James, and John, and Wesley, and Luther, and Swedenborg,, and Andrew Jackson Davis, and thousands of distinguished scientists, statesmen, clergymen and philosophers, besides other thousands who testify they see with clairvoyant eye and hear with clairuudient ear their departed friends whom they fully recognize? Shall I, a Spiritualist, reject the testimony of these millions of the past and accept as truth the guessings of Mr. Bruce?

"He says he is a Theosophist and a reincarnationist. He calls Theosophy the 'Wisdom Religion.' Now, let us consider briefly the teachings of the religion of Mr. Bruce: Theosophy teaches that man came out of Nirvana, or from a condition of perfect and unalloyed bliss. He had no personal or conscious existence. God then planned to start him on a journey as an individual intelligence, and subject him for eons of centuries to all the misery, sorrow, suffering and crime that Infinite Intelligence could conceive of. He is doomed to be born and to die unnumbered billions of times; he must commit every known and unknown crime, suffer all conceivable torture and inflict like

pain on his fellow-man, and, after he has suffered all and made others suffer to the fullest measure, then at some far distant period he will be swallowed up again in Nirvana, lose his personality, and end where he began.

"God has a great school through which he is pushing his children, not for their happiness but for his own amusement. This must be so, because he permits them to realize their own existence in material bodies only where the pain and sorrow outweighs the pleasure. After they have suffered all—have had all the experience the physical universe can furnish—their God extinguishes their personality.

"God has but one department in his school in which his children can gain knowledge, and that is the physical department. No progress can be made in the spirit world or devachan. The ego or individual spirit can learn nothing except when inhabiting a physical body, hence he has to be reincarnated almost an infinite number of times to gain knowledge. God severely punishes his children in one incarnation for wrongful acts committed in previous physical bodies, but for reasons the justice of which is not apparent, he takes away their memory of those actions. Thus they are liable to be reincarnated a thousand times to be punished a thousand times for the same offenses.

"If we could remember the particular sins we committed the other time we were on earth we would be apt to avoid repeating them. No, we don't remember; but that is not a good excuse with God, according to Theosophy.

"I have met four Theosophists who remembered their former embodiment. One said he was Moses; one was John the Baptist; one said he was the great Pharaoh who built the pyramids of Egypt, but when asked to explain the process of their construction, he suddenly remembered he had an engagement elsewhere. The fourth one informed me confidentially that he was Almighty God, and that he made this world and intended to smash it to fragments soon. A friend of mine met a Theosophist in Los Angeles who informed him that he was the father of Jesus Christ.

"I have never known a Theosophist who did not claim that in his last appearance on earth prior to this he was a king or great general, or was Moses, or Elijah, or Homer, or some one of the distinguished personages. I have never seen a Theosophist who had ever been a thief or a slave, or even a common fellow.

"Theosophists deplore the ignorance of Spiritualists for believing that there have ever been any genuine spirit manifestations. Spirits, they say, can not come back except to enter the body of some babe about to be born. Only the 'shells' or 'animal essence' come, and these have no more intelligence than the ghosts of dogs or rattlesnakes; and yet they ask us to believe that some old hermit whom they call an 'adept,' who

lives in a cave in the mountains of India, can dematerialize his body, swish himself out of sight, and, quick as a flash, reform his body and promenade the streets of London or New York.

"In vain have reliable travelers, able and trustworthy men, who are familiar with all the supposed haunts of these 'masters,' exposed this fallacy and shown conclusively that there are no such persons living there. In vain have William Emmette Coleman, Dr. Jas. M. Peebles, and others, exposed the Blavatsky delusion, and the unreliability of that Theosophical high priestess. The reincarnation writers go on reiterating the old and oft-exploded story and flood the country with their guesses. They theorize, they assert, they guess, they prove nothing.

"Spiritualists theorize also. They say man survives the change called death; that he retains a conscious existence beyond the grave; that he can, under proper conditions, communicate his thoughts to mortals; and they back up this theory by the testimony of thousands and tens of thousands of reliable witnesses.

"There are hundreds of truthful mediums who heal the sick by laying on of hands. Prattling children are entranced and deliver poems and discourses that would do credit to the most gifted poets and statesmen. Writing in French, German, English, Swedish, Danish, Chinese, and other languages come on clean slates suspended over the heads of an audience, or while the slate is held in the hands of the investigator, precluding all possibility of deceptions. Often these communications are of a high order.

"Thousands testify that they have heard independent voices conveying loving messages, proffering advice and comfort to the afflicted or despondent; true prophecies have been made; soul-inspiring music heard; and clairvoyants in every civilized country on earth testify by the thousands that they clearly see their departed loved ones.

"I ask Mr. Bruce, are all these marvelous things caused by 'graveworms'? Must I cast aside as a delusion and a lie the story of Samuel and the medium of Endor? Shall I believe that Jesus, Peter, James and John were deluded when they thought they saw the spirits of Moses and Elias? Shall I say there were no angels who announced the birth of Jesus? Must I believe that Jesus himself held no converse with angelic personages, and that Paul heard no spirit voice? Shall I reject as fables the testimony of hundreds of thousands of intelligent people, and account for all the glorious spirit manifestations of all the ages, on the hypothesis that it was 'half-rotted larvae and wriggling graveworms of the etheric graveyards' that produced the phenomena? Must I refrain from sitting in a holy silence in a seance with my family or friends, and from inviting the presence of my dear departed mother, wife or child, if I happen to have a 'pimple on my chin'?

"Now, I admit that Theosophy champions some grand doctrines, such as universal brotherhood; still, it has no monopoly of that. Brotherhood is a cardinal principle of Odd Fellowship, Masonry, labor unions, Socialism, etc. Its theory of reincarnation appears to me to be illogical, devoid of justice, and calculated to dampen hope, destroy aspiration for better things, and cause a deep sadness to settle down upon those who have anticipated with joy the time when they would meet and greet the loved ones who have crossed the mystic river. The Theosophical mother can not hope to again meet her child that was taken from her. Friend shall not meet friend, for those who have gone on before have either been born back into this world or are in a condition in which they can not be recognized, having been prepared to again enter baby bodies. Friend shall miss friend to all eternity, or till that time when both will lose their individuality.

"Theosophy is a theory—is guesswork pure and simple; and, to my way of thinking, very bad guessing at best. If, as it teaches, every soul has in the past, from compulsion, experienced all possible suffering, or will be compelled to experience it in this or some future existence in a physical body, and can not gain Nirvana, lose his individuality and win annihilation until he has experienced all suffering, then, according to that logic, no person should put forth his hand to restrain the tyrant, the rape fiend, or the murderer, because the intended victim must suffer this torture in order to 'gain needed experience'; and he who would prevent a man, woman or child from getting the necessary experience only delays the victims in their journey to personal extinction, Nirvana and bliss.

"If Theosophy is true, what a stupendous farce Infinite Wisdom is carrying on! How defective is God's school, in that he has no way of educating his children except during the time they occupy physical bodies! How cruel He is to punish a child a thousand times for an offense, and after each punishment take away all memory of the transgression for which he was punished. How deceptive and cruel He must be to let loose myriads of 'larvae and senseless bhutas' upon us, which, while pretending to be loving spirit friends, are in fact 'graveworms' prowling about seeking to bore into us if we have any boils or pimples, while we poor, helpless victims of a relentless fate think we are communicating with our loved ones or with exalted intelligence of the angelic realms!

"Theosophy may be as claimed, the 'Wisdom Religion,' and Brother Bruce may be its true prophet, but I am not yet fully convinced of it." * * *

The following is a quotation from another article of Mr. Dague's:

"I do not accept Theosophy because it has no proofs of the genuineness of its claims and asks me to accept as truth its guessings. Its reasonings do not appeal to me because I can see nothing in all of Nature's

methods that would justify me in believing in reincarnation as taught by Theosophists. Moreover, the system is devoid of every element of justice if God sends me back into earth life millions of times to punish me for sins committed in former embodiments, and so takes away my memory that I do not know what sins He is punishing me for."

GOD CREATES EVIL.

Isaiah xlv:7 says: "I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil. I the Lord do all these things."

In the 1st chapter of Collossians and 16th verse we read: "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in the earth, visible and invisible." * * * "All things were created by Him." Thus it is shown that God created evil.

If Christians believe, as they claim they do, that the Christian Bible is "the infallible word of God," they must believe that God created evil. Believing that, why do they fight against evil? In doing so are they fighting against God? Reasoning from this standpoint, might it not be a question whether evil should be entirely destroyed? The battle between good and evil is always raging; and in this continuous warfare men learn the lesson taught by the contrast between them, that good is preferable to evil; that it is better to accept the good and reject the evil. What good, then, could the lesson of good and evil learned in a former life do for the man in this life when he has no recollection of it and no remembrance of having lived a former life?

Is it not true that sin and evil are useful, since through contrasting them with good we learn to choose the good?

All spiritual progress has been attained through knowing good and evil and selecting the good.

If one committed evil in a former life and had no recollection of it in this life, how would his suffering through the law of Karma benefit or help him in reforming himself? How could one learn the lesson that sinning teaches if he suffered its consequences without knowing that he had sinned? Such philosophy is untenable. However, we are waiting for the proof, and if it can ever be produced we will gladly receive it, believing as we do that there is nothing wrong with truth and that the Cause of everything that is is right and the purpose good. Then do let us have the proof, if there is any proof to be had of its truth.

THEOSOPHISTS AT LILY DALE.

Several years ago Madam Bessant, who was successor to Madam Blavatsky as the head of the Theosophical Society of the World, and her companion, Countess Wachtmeister, occupied the rostrum at the Lily Dale

Spiritualist Camp Meeting, Cassadaga, N. Y., giving several lectures, at the conclusion of which members of the audience were invited to ask questions pertaining to the subject of their discourses.

In these lectures they declared that the spirit-controls were all earth-bound spirits, that they were ignorant, vicious, etc., and that it was ruinous to the health of body, mind and morals of the medium to be controlled by spirits. They painted the most terrible word-picture of its awful results. There were probably fifty or a hundred mediums in that audience who had received the benefits and blessings of mediumship, such as the knowledge of a future life, development of their spiritual faculties, restoration to health, the unfoldment of individuality, character, etc., and these Theosophic women had the audacity to tell us all that our mediumship was pernicious, ruinous and leading all mediums who practiced it down to the most terrible and distressing mental, moral and physical state or condition of ruin.

At the close of the lectures the speakers called for questions and the mediums whose spirit-helpers had been so insultingly attacked fired questions at these Madams that proved deadly missiles to their claims. After denouncing mediumship in all its phases, spirit-control, physical mediumship, etc., the Countess told us of a medium she had developed for materialization in England, whose work of materializing spirits she pictured in marvelous detail as being most wonderful, because she had developed her and the work of development was properly done. The idea was emphasized by her that we mediums were dealing with a force or power of which we were ignorant, and that it was dangerous; but she, having a perfect understanding of it, could handle it with safety.

Someone in the audience asked the following question: "Where did you get the knowledge of how to develop materializing mediums with perfect safety when it is so dangerous?" She replied: "We learned it in the study of Theosophy." Whereupon, the question was asked: "Does Theosophy know more about the development of mediumship than the spirit-friends who have developed all the mediums of Modern Spiritualism?" To this the lady replied: "Oh, you do not understand!" But she failed to try to make us understand.

Mrs. R. S. Lillie, the well-known medium and Spiritualist speaker (now in spirit life), asked the following question: "If your doctrine of Karma is true, are we not doing wrong in assisting the needy widow and six children of the man recently killed on the railroad here, since they are all suffering the result of wrongdoing in former lives, according to your doctrine, and are working out their Karma? Would it not be interfering with the Divine plan to lend them assistance?" "Oh, you don't understand!" And this representative of Theosophy failed again to

answer the question. Then we asked the following question: "As you are working in the interest of Theosophy, why do you not bring out into the civilized world some of those Theosophic Mahatmas of the Himalaya Mountains whom you have told us possess such great powers and let us witness some of their wonderful phenomena described in your discourse?" Everybody would believe after seeing it, would they not? "Oh!" said she, "that would not do at all. The people are so ignorant they would crucify them." "Well," said we, "if the people of this country are so ignorant that they would crucify these wonderful men whom some Theosophists claim can rip their bowels open and heal them at once; throw a rope up in the air, make it stay there while they climb it, going up and up until they go out of sight; and whom you claim can leave their bodies and build up another body at will, what would hinder them from leaving their bodies while the people were crucifying them and they building up another body and remaining to witness the crucifixion? You just told us they had the power to build a body at will, and one such re-embodiment of a real and genuine Mahatma, right before the 'ignorant' and superstitious Americans would be so convincing that they would become converts to Theosophy and nevermore question there being people you call Mahatmas or doubt the wonderful power of these said-to-be inhabitants of the Himalaya Mountains of India." The same reply to this as to the other questions was: "Oh, dear! You do not understand." And we poor mediums were forced to the conclusion that we did not understand how these unproved claims of Theosophy could be true.

We had been called upon to take charge of the Thought Exchange held in the Library Building of the camp that evening and we gave the Madam and the Countess a cordial invitation to attend the meeting, telling them the subjects of the afternoon would be continued there. Both ladies promised to be there, but neither came. However, we had a good meeting, in which one good woman well known throughout the United States testified to having been cured of the morphine habit by her spirit-friends. This habit she had acquired at the hand of her physician in a severe illness. A number of others testified to having been healed of different diseases, and one sailor declared that he had been cured of drunkenness, profanity, the use of tobacco, meat eating, etc., by the influence and power of his spirit-mother assisted by Indian spirits, and for six years he had been free and had lived a clean life. Many testimonies were given of the help and blessings these good people had received at the hands of the spirit-friends whom these Theosophists denounced as "earth-bound and evil spirits" and whose influence they said was "pernicious." Many Theosophists seem to have a special

feeling of ill-will toward Spiritualism and miss no opportunity to condemn and misrepresent it. Spiritualists should fervently pray for their reformation in this particular. They sadly need our prayers.

This "Thought Exchange" meeting was a rousing good one, as they usually are, and the speeches and testimonies of the evening gave unanswerable proof of the fact that spirit-control is not "dangerous," that the mediums' guides are not "evil spirits," that spirit-communion is not "pernicious" nor "ruinous to health," etc., but the opposite of what these Theosophic leaders had declared. Mediumship furnishes the greatest healing power. It heals the body, enlightens and harmonizes the mind. It is the greatest moral and spiritual influence and teacher. In short, it is of God and certainly is GOOD.

We are sure that the general belief of that houseful of American citizens who attended both the Theosophic meeting and the Thought Exchange were satisfied that they were not so ignorant as to crucify Mahatmas for the crime (?) of producing Theosophic phenomena, whatever such phenomena might be; and also that the work of the spirits through the mediums of Modern Spiritualism is helpful and good and is of the greatest value to mankind. The assumption of these two leaders in Theosophy is equal to the other teachings of Theosophy, including that of reincarnation.

Other Theosophists also teach that only "earth-bound" and "evil spirits" communicate with mortals. To those who know, those who have bands of communicating spirits, and all others who have by scientific methods proved this Theosophic claim untrue, it is of little effect. But, to those who do not know that this claim is false, it has undoubtedly done harm, by frightening them away from Spiritualism; in this it has without doubt, to a small extent, fulfilled the purpose for which it was intended.

If this Theosophic claim were true, then Jesus, the angel Gabriel, Moses, Elias, and unnumbered other communicating spirits of the Bible were "earth-bound" and "evil spirits." Gladstone, Lincoln, John Wesley, Wm. T. Stead, A. R. Wallace and hosts of other leading men of the world, and thousands of beloved fathers, mothers, children and friends are all, yes all, "earth-bound" and "evil spirits." This wholesale, contemptible and vicious attack is made on innocent spirits and Spiritualism by members of that boasted "brotherly love" cult called Theosophy.

THE SPIRITUAL BODY.

We have earnestly sought these many years fo[r] proof of the spirits of men inhabiting other bodie[s] than the present one, but we have never found th[e] least evidence of it, with but one exception, and tha[t] evidence we accept gladly. We refer to the evidenc[e] of the fact that man inherits and inhabits a "spiritua[l]

body" in the spiritual world after vacating his physical body in this world.

Whether the theory of man's evolution from the lower forms of life to his present state of being is true or not, it is true that we are in possession of the evidence that our next incarnation is one of evolution and not one of retrogression. We have the evidence that at death we enter the higher life, where we shall occupy the "spiritual body" in a sphere of progression where greater opportunities for spiritual advancement awaits all mankind. We say we are in possession of evidence of man's re-embodiment in a better and more spiritual form for his higher spiritual development and that he goes forward for better things, as does the worm when he leaves the cumbersome form of the worm for that of the beautiful butterfly.

In this spiritual incarnation of man the law of evolution is not outraged as it would be in the successive reincarnations back into physical bodies as taught by Theosophy.

In proof of these statements we have many thoroughly competent and truthful witnesses. These witnesses are well-known spirit friends and do not testify to this because they were taught in earth life to believe in it; they testify from their own knowledge, as they are now in possession of their spirit bodies. These spirit friends have proved themselves true witnesses in every other instance in which they have given their testimony, therefore we trust them. Their testimonies are numerous, coming to people all over the civilized world and all agreeing, each one declaring that he or she is now inhabiting the spiritual body in the spirit land, and we have come to believe it is true. If the reincarnationists had one single proof of the truth of their claims as well authenticated as this it would be more convincing to the investigator.

Though we must theorize upon our origin, former condition of life, our number of rebirths, etc., we need theorize no longer on our next step in evolution, for the simple reason that men and women see the spirit friends clothed in their spiritual bodies, we hear their voices and talk with them, we know them by their individual presence, and by these experiences and many more have we proved the truth of their evolution from earthly forms to spiritual bodies. This is progression, while rebirths back into earthly bodies is retrogression.

DOES THE LIVING OF MANY EARTHLY LIVES MAKE ONE WISE?

Does it make men wiser to live over and over the same experience time after time? If, after death, we reincarnate and again grow as children until we

reach maturity, what benefit is derived from it if we forget it all each time? Did Madam Blavatsky, or does any of the self-styled "Mahatmas," "Yogis," or "Adepts" of Theosophy, who claim to have lived many lives of earth, show any great degree of wisdom or spiritual attainment above other men and women who are reasonably fortunate in their inheritances and environments? We think not. Is there difference enough in the ordinary man or woman and those persons who claim to have been the rounds of the cycles of time and experienced many incarnations, to show the wisdom those ages of experience should give? Are not they who claim this wonderful development just as peculiar in their make-up as other people? Do they not have their weaknesses, their idiosyncracies? Are they not as superstitious, as intolerant, as dogmatic as others? In short, are they not as poorly developed spiritually, morally and intellectually as those who have not lived scores and scores of times, and through many cycles of the ages? The answer is this: The development of the individual depends upon his inheritances, his environments, his opportunities, which govern to a great extent his acquirements, and not on his many incarnations of which he has no recollection and of which there appears to be no proof.

WILL MEMORY SOMETIME RETURN?

But, says the reincarnationist nothing is lost; all that has been learned in these many incarnations will be retained. Memory will return, and the wisdom gleaned will bring its blessing.

One Theosophic author says: "Not until a man has accomplished his regeneration and become a Son of God, *a Christ*, can he have these memories of his past lives." According to this, everyone who remembers having lived before, as some reincarnationists claim they remember, is a Christ. Being infidel to the gospel of reincarnation, we feel called upon to ask if those who think they remember their former embodiments are endowed with more of the principles of a Christ or are more Christ-like than the rest of us who do not remember our past incarnations?

Is this Theosophic author "a son of God," "a Christ"? If so, does he do the things that Jesus did and live the life of the Christ? We can see little difference in the average person who thinks he remembers his former incarnations and those who do not remember such supposed occurrences. Again we ask for proof of Theosophic claims.

Lying before us is a paper published by the Theosophic Pub. Co., 144 Madison Ave., New York, entitled "An Epitome of Theosophy." This should be authoritative. It says in Article 7 "that when union

with the Divine is affected all the events and experiences of each incarnation are known."

If there is ever a union of man with the Divine as taught by Theosophists would we not at that time be supposed to know all things anyway, even without having been reincarnated at all? And would it not be much better to remember our experiences from one incarnation to another, so as to profit by the experience of each embodiment along the way to Godhood?

But how do Theosophists know this? Has anyone ever returned from "a union of the Divine" to tell us?

ONE SINGLE SCIENTIFICALLY DEMONSTRATED TRUTH IS WORTH MORE THAN ALL THE THEORIES, GUESSES AND ASSUMPTIONS OF ALL THE THEOSOPHIES EVER INVENTED.

With all due respect and humility of spirit, we would ask such reincarnationist the pertinent question: How do you know? Assumption is not proof. Prove these claims, please, and we will be satisfied and will accept them.

We have interviewed ancient and exhalted spirits in the hope if reincarnation were true we might find some one or more of our many former mothers and fathers who could give authentic knowledge of who and what we were in some one of our supposed many incarnations; but alas! alas! we were doomed to disappointment. Not one darling mother, not one dear father, of this doubting and supposedly many times orphaned son, has ever responded to his sincere prayers. But maybe they were still "doing business at the old stand" and were all reincarnated and growing up as some more sons and daughters of other parents. So in this our hopes were blasted as usual when in search of this proof of reincarnation.

If Theosophy is true there can be no mistake in the matter of our having had many fathers and mothers, because reincarnationists in Washington, D. C., San Francisco, Cal., and several other cities of the United States, after attending our meetings, have told us that we were the re-embodiment of some great orator of ancient times or some old "prophet," "seer," or "man of God" of Bible times. But, unfortunately or otherwise, these Theosophic "Yogi," "Adepts," "Mahatmas," or believers in such things, were unable to trace our lineage back to the same individual or to the same century, consequently we must have been many times reincarnated if Theosophy is true, and yet we don't think it is.

REINCARNATION ANNIHILATES PERSONALITY AND INDIVIDUALITY.

Reincarnation if true would annihilate all love relations, all friendships, because our parents when reincarnated would become the children of other mothers. Our chi[illegible] would be born again of

other parents and they with all the other relatives and friends would embark on other earthly journeys, becoming other men and women with other names, different bodies, changing their personal appearance, and sometimes changing their sex; living again and again, over and over, many earth lives; filling all the varied spheres of the earthly existence, all for the development of their souls or spirits. Oh! how lonesome one would get for the presence and companionship of a dear and permanent old mother, a darling wife, a sweet child, or an old comrade or friend! "But," says the reincarnationist, "you do not understand. One would not worry on this account because he would not remember his loved ones. He will have forgotten them all." What a comfort and consolation it must be to believe that you are to forget that you ever had a dearly beloved mother, child or friend (?). Oh, how comforting (?) is this heathen doctrine of annihilation, called reincarnation!

EXIT JOHN JONES, ENTER SWAMI PROPAGANDA.

If Mr. John Jones dies and his body is cremated and he afterwards reincarnates, becoming the child of another mother, his physical body has changed, his personality and his physical entity are gone. He grows up in this new body displaying certain new traits of character and personality—in short, he becomes another person entirely, with another name, another body, and a different mind. His personality as John Jones is totally annihilated and the child with the new name—Swami Propaganda—and a new personality sets out on another lifetime experience. If John Jones was a white man and was reincarnated a Hindu Swami, would not his personality and his individuality both be lost? If John Jones had been born a woman would he not have lost his personality and his individuality?

He that was John Jones in his former life has changed his whole nature, his color, his temperament, his individual tastes, etc. His likes and dislikes are all changed. His religion is changed. One's religion depends upon the country in which he is born, and he being born this time in India, his religion has undergone a great change. When he was John Jones he was an American Christian, but now he is a Buddhist of India. In fact, John Jones has become another individual entirely. He has lost all he ever knew about Christianity and everything else. He has lost his personality completely. His personality and his individuality are both entirely extinguished or swallowed up in the Hindu man Swami Propaganda.

REINCARNATIONS NUMEROUS—SEX CHANGED.

We are acquainted with a reincarnationist who thinks she remembers having been reincarnated five

times. She tells the story with all sincerity. Each incarnation furnished strange and wonderful experiences. She says that twice she was incarnated a man and lived a man's life and three times she was incarnated as a woman and lived the life and experiences of a woman each time. Did she not lose her individuality and personality as a man when she became a woman and did she not lose her individuality and personality as a woman when she became a man? If she was really reincarnated five different times in five different bodies, changing her sex from one to the other, it would seem reasonable to believe that she lost entirely her own personality and individuality at each change of bodies and certainly at each change of sex. This case, like other similar ones, is easily explained by known facts in Spiritualism. The woman was no doubt honest in her belief, but her error is explained in the fact that she, being mediumistic and her guardian spirits coming near her when she chanced to be in the proper state of mind and condition of body to receive it, the spirits thinking of their earth life experiences, their thoughts were reflected or reproduced upon the mind and consciousness of the medium as thoughts are reproduced in telepathy and thought transference; and she, the subject or medium, accepted such thoughts as being her own memory of earthly experiences. Let it be remembered that it is sometimes very hard for a well-developed medium to distinguish between his own thoughts and spirit impressions. This explanation should be conclusive to any mental medium.

We met another lady who thought she had experienced wonderful things in former lives, the most wonderful of which was the claim that she could remember having been reincarnated seventeen times. With all these wonderful experiences which Theosophists claim are necessary to one's intellectual and spiritual development, she did not appear to be endowed with more wisdom than just ordinary people. We have been looking for some one of those many times reincarnated and consequently wonderfully wise reincarnationists for years, but alas! alas! our search has been in vain.

To the thinking men and women who may read this book we would ask: Does not one lose his individuality when he loses his memory, when he has forgotten his name, changed his sex and doesn't know it, changed his nationality with no recollection of it, forgotten where he lived or that he had lived at all, having no recollection of his parents, other relatives or friends, his memory of everything gone, all gone, is not his individuality lost and gone with all the rest? Is there anything left that could be called individuality?

The above is predicated on the supposition that reincarnation is true and that the man has forgotten his former lives, therefore has lost his individuality. But if reincarnation is not true, then he has lost neither his memory, his personality, nor his individuality, but is in full possession of all of them, including his mental and spiritual faculties; therefore, one who has never experienced re-embodiments is in a far superior condition to one who has been re-embodied hundreds or thousands of times, because the re-embodied man has forgotten much of his past experience and the other one remembers the past experience of his one life and never loses it in spirit life. It would seem that it is much better to remember a little than to forget a great deal. If we have lived other lives we have forgotten them and reincarnationists have thus far given no proof whatever that the time will ever come when we will remember them. All such claims are based entirely on assumption.

BELIEF IN REINCARNATION PAINFUL.

Is not the belief in the doctrine of reincarnation as painful as it is impossible of proof? It would be painful to any modern farmer to be obliged to take up the methods of agriculture employed by Moses of Bible times, such as plowing with a crooked stick, sowing grain by hand and reaping it with a cycle, threshing with a flail and grinding wheat between two millstones worked with the hands. This would not be progression. It would not be pleasant for a modern mechanic to go back to the ignorance of mechanics that prevailed in Israel. The Bible says: "Now, there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel." "But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his ax, and his mattock." (I Sam. xiii:19-20.)

If we were obliged to go back and live in those environments once, after having lived in this grand century, we would no doubt protest vigorously against it; and if we had to do it repeatedly, living these primitive ideas over and over, it would become to us a hell almost equal to the Theosophists' Karma. And yet this would be infinitely preferable to going back to the same natural state of gestation, passing through the necessary preparation to enter this life again with all that it means to every mother and to every child born into the world, and then to enter it with no knowledge of what this life is or what lies before; having forgotten all that had been learned in former embodiments and then to enter into the same old rounds of growth, physically, mentally and in every other way, being helpless and dependent upon a mother's care and a father's kindness for support.

And then to think of these good parents being deceived into thinking that the child is their very own. The parents' love for the child and the child's love for the parents becomes great and by it they are indeed blessed, only to be robbed of their child later after caring for it all its life, to be separated at its death forever, their lost child, annihilated, never, never to meet it again. This is awful to contemplate. It is retrogression and retrogression is not the law or rule of Nature. We cannot go back and live the lives of the Israelites in their primitive and undeveloped state. There is no necessity for doing so; nothing could be gained by it. Neither can we see any necessity of our going back to babe life again and again, because there could be nothing gained by it, since we can add nothing whatever to what we had learned in this life and to do it we must forget all we had ever learned and consequently could not have the assistance of our formerly acquired education.

The doctrine of reincarnation appears to the writer as the most inconsistent thing ever introduced into a world of progression, a world of civilization. There seems to be no end of the inconsistencies of the horrible doctrine and its many and continuous outrages on dear old progressive, harmonious Mother Nature, who is always working to educate, unfold and elevate the mind and spirit of man.

GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY.

On Sunday, August 13, 1917, Mrs. Sprague and the writer had been married fifty years, and on Sunday, August 12th, we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of our marriage. The services were held at the Spiitualist Camp Meeting grounds at Chesterfield, Indiana, where we met many of our dear friends from different States of the Union and enjoyed the day's festivities very much with them.

These friends are dear to us. Our hearts quicken their beats at the mention of their names and we live in the happy anticipation of meeting them again sometime on this side of life, and Spiritualism gives us assurance that if we do not meet here we shall surely meet them all in the spirit-world when we shall have reached that more permanent sphere of life. But oh! the thought of reincarnation and its annihilatory principles, if true, would have changed that day of rejoicing and happiness to a day of mourning and sorrow. Because if these good friends were to become reincarnated they would all be lost to us forever. God forbid! The great power of love cannot be thus wasted and lost.

REBIRTHS BREAK UP FAMILIES.

We have three lovely children, two of whom are in this life and one in heaven. We have seven beauti-

ful grandchildren and we love them all very much. In the nature of things we shall soon pass on to the higher life. And what will be the final culmination of our long, eventful and happy earthly lives? If reincarnation is true we will be separated forever as a family, at least. Mrs. Sprague will be reincarnated in some family unknown to us and we will be reborn into some other family now unknown to any of us. And if by the rulings of fate we should both be reborn into the same family and grow up as brother and sister, neither one of us would know that we had lived together as husband and wife in this life for fifty years. Neither would our new parents have the remotest idea that they were entertaining those who once were the Spragues, as their own children, and neither one of us would know it either. Oh, my! isn't this philosophy of forgetfulness beautiful (?). Neither would our children know it. We would be lost to them and lost to each other and in a few years they would follow, going through the same processes of retrogression, and they would be lost to each other also. This would pretty effectually destroy and break up the family. All its love ties would be broken: aye, worse, they would be annihilated. All memory of each other would be gone, gone forever, together with all personalities, individualities, affections, intellectual and spiritual attainments, together with the development of their spiritual faculties, EVERYTHING gone. The family annihilated, root and branch. This is the AWFUL WORK OF THIS HEATHEN DOCTRINE OF REINCARNATION, if it is true. It seems to us it cannot be true. This awful and abhorrent thing can never occur. A good God would never create such love and affection, such blessed and sacred family ties, and then ruthlessly annihilate them.

ADOPTED CHILDREN SUFFER LOSS OF PARENTS.

Even adopted children, in their teens, or on arriving at manhood or womanhood, when told for the first time that the ones they know as father and mother are not their own parents, are caused to suffer agonies of mind. Why do they suffer? *Because they have lost their parents.* Would it not be the same if one's parents became reincarnated? We think it would be even worse, for in the first place the adopted child might enjoy the belief that he would meet his own dear parents sometime on the spirit side of life, while *in the case of their reincarnation there is no hope of their ever meeting again and certainly not as parents and child*, because their parenthood is annihilated when they become the children of other parents.

SHALL WE SOMETIME RECALL?

Perhaps the reincarnationist may say that we are mistaken; that the time will come when we will recall every incarnation and every experience will be made clearer than the daily experiences of the life we are now living. This might all be very well, but there is no proof of its truth, there is no example to prove it. No great Mahatma has ever appeared with the proof of its truth. Reincarnationists, in assuming this, are doing so without evidence or attempt at proof. But suppose it was true and every incarnation, together with every experience, was recalled and one remembered every one of his many wives, every one of his mothers, every one of his fathers and every one of his numerous children, his grandfathers, grandmothers, uncles, aunts, cousins and friends, what good could it do him to recall in memory each one of the great army of former loved ones of his vast family and all their kindly acts and deeds of love, since every last one of them had become reincarnated and their personalities and individualities were lost, and if the time should ever come when they regained their memories and so desired, would all of this vast family be brought together? Since reincarnationists know no more of this than they do about other things pertaining to the subject, we will, for the sake of considering the subject further, suppose it was true and ask a few questions: Would one love each of his hundreds or thousands of wives with the same sacred affection he now has for his present wife? Would this also apply to all of his different parents, children and other relatives and friends, or would one's love be so widely spread out over this vast multitude of relatives and friends that it would become so thin one would not know he possessed any love for them? Or would his falling in love with his many different wives have developed in him the great capacity for loving necessary to include them all?

If the above were all true, what good could come out of it that would be superior to the results of one life with individuality retained at all times?

REINCARNATION ACKNOWLEDGED UNPROVABLE BY A REINCARNATIONIST.

One author declares as follows: "The only answer to the query 'Is rebirth a fact?' is, 'Does your soul recognize it as such?' Until the soul feels of itself that the theory is true, because it coincides with that inner conviction, there is no use in arguing the matter. The soul must recognize it for itself, must answer its own question. It is true that the presentation of the theory (we call it a theory although the Yogis know it is a *fact*) will awaken in the mind of some—may give them courage to consider as reasonable the half-formed thoughts and queries which had

floated around in their minds for years—but that is all it can do."

That is to say, the Yogis are the only ones who know and the rest must take it on faith, as the Yogis, or their supporters, will not try to prove its truth. Oh, the naughty, naughty Yogis! If they do know, and if it is such a beautiful thing to know as it is claimed, *why don't they prove it to the world?*

THEOSOPHIC "MASTERS OF WISDOM" INACCESSIBLE.

There are about fifteen billion inhabitants in the world today. How would it do for Theosophists to ask some of their "Adepts," "Yogis," or "Mahatmas," whom they call "Masters of Wisdom"—since we common folks cannot gain access to them in their seclusion—this question: When there was but one billion souls incarnated on earth, where were these other fourteen billion souls that are now incarnated here? If they say they were incarnated on other planets, then the question might arise as to whether this planet is superior to some other planets, and being so, is more helpful in their progression? This in turn would naturally call for the question, How do these wonderful "Masters of Wisdom" know, and if they know how they know, why don't they tell how they know? Have they visited other planets? The world is constantly asking for the reasons why. Theosophic teachings, like those of Modern Christianity, must be accepted on faith because of lack of proof. The proof is wanted.

BENEFITS AND POSSIBILITIES OF REINCARNATION (?).

Is it possible for one to be a child an hundred or a thousand times or more? If reincarnation is true, one may have a thousand mothers, one at a time, and as many fathers too. One may have as many wives as he has incarnations, and many more if he incarnates among the Mohammedans, who are poligamists, and are allowed five wives at one time; or if he incarnates in the United States, where divorce courts abound, he may have more. One may have brothers and sisters "galore," a few of which are born in each of the families in which he incarnates. And several children may be born to one in each incarnation, and a thousand incarnations would make one the parent of an army. His children may be born under different flags, speaking different tongues, inheriting different colored skins, and being of different nationalities, yet all of them children of the same parent. Of course one would not know that he was the proud parent of so large and promising a family. But what of that? What one has forgotten can cause him no

pain; as one has no recollection of his loved ones, one has nothing to worry about on that score. But whence the supply of these many children, each one of whom may have as many more children as their father had? Must they come from other forms in which each one has been incarnated? Oh, the mystery of it! Aside from this great parentage, one may have many other experiences. He may have been a Methodist in one incarnation, a Baptist in another, a Catholic in another, and if born in a heathen land he may have accepted any of the heathen religions, and if reborn in any one of the civilized countries of the world he may have been a Spiritualist. Oh, what great opportunities the living of a succession of lives offers to one (?). To know this, and to know that one is bound to forget all he has learned and experienced, is such an inspiration and proves such a blessing (?).

The following story is going the rounds: Mr. W., of Cincinnati, Ohio, was a very strong materialist. He was very certain that death was the end of all. He was taken sick one day and died. Good spirits welcomed him to the spirit-world. But when they told him that he had died and was now in the spirit-world, he would not believe them, and after much discussion on the subject he said: "If I am dead prove it to me. Show me my dead father and I will believe." "But," said they, "your father went back to earth and was reincarnated nearly one year ago." "I don't care if he did; show him to me and I will believe that I too am dead." So they took him to earth and showed him a nice fat baby holding a rattlebox in his hand and crying lustily. "There," said they, pointing to the babe, "that little babe is your father in his new incarnation. He has entered a new cycle and is progressing rapidly. See, he has already learned to shake a rattlebox. How wonderful!" Looking dubiously at first at the crying babe, suddenly an expression of great fear came over his features and he shook and trembled as he cried out, "Y-e-s, y-e-s, my God, yes! That's my father; I know it is he, because there is that same old wart on his nose. But take me back! Oh, take me back; I can't stay here, for dad has changed so that I am scared of him. Oh! take me back! Take me before I am caught in one of them tarnation incarnation cycles just as poor dad was. Oh! take me back. Oh! take me back!" and his voice failed from fear and exhaustion. Just then the alarm went off and Mr. W. awoke from his nightmare.

REINCARNATION NOT PROVEN.

In all the realm of scientific research not an iota of proof seems to have been discovered, else Theosophists in their unaccountable zeal would certainly have produced it. This fact is a source of comfort

and inspiration to the writer, as he would dreadfully hate to think that all of his loved ones were to be annihilated and all their love ties destroyed.

Believers, believe if you must and you will,
But we, lacking proof, must be doubting it still.

BELIEFS MAY BE DESPISED, BUT NOT BELIEVERS.

While the doctrine of reincarnation is not at all pleasing to us, let it be remembered that if reincarnationists despise and condemn us for these, our sincere conclusions regarding the subject, we shall go on loving them the same as ever. It shall make no difference with us. They remain our brothers and sisters just the same. And if reincarnation is true, we may have been even more closely related than brothers and sisters. Nobody knows. To make plain our position we will say: Some seventy years ago our mother was a member of the Baptist Church and sincerely believed in their doctrine of a burning hell for sinners, and she prayed and suffered accordingly. I always loved my mother dearly. She is now an angel of heaven and my love for her has not decreased. I do not love my mother less because of her former belief in the orthodox Christian's hell; but I hate and despise the doctrine of eternal punishment the more. We may despise and condemn one's belief but we never despise the believer.

PROGRESSION IN SPIRIT LIFE.

How beautiful and inspiring are the teachings of Modern Spiritualism with its assurance of constant and permanent progression, given us through its thousands of mediums and the many communications from those who are enjoying spirit life. These wise spirits declare that all true knowledge acquired in a lifetime on earth is permanently retained in the spirit realms.

Through varied experiences we acquire knowledge; and the proper application of knowledge leads to wisdom. Accepting this fact, the question arises: How can our acquired knowledge lead to wisdom when we have forgotten all we ever learned in former incarnations and are starting anew to learn again the forgotten things we had learned in former lives? Would it not be a waste of time in relearning what childhood has once taught us? Would it not be better to remain in the spirit-world retaining the knowledge acquired in one earthly life? Would it not be a better way to acquire wisdom than by so many re-embodiments?

KNOWLEDGE VERSUS BELIEF.

There is the same difference in the proven truths of Spiritualism and the theories of some Spiritualists as there is between knowledge and belief.

One may be a Spiritualist and possess the knowledge of its truth, and he may believe in "reincarnation," "spirit-mates," "spirit obsession," or the "immaculate conception" of Jesus of Nazareth; or one may be a Spiritualist, possessing the knowledge of its truth, and not believe in any of them. Both are Spiritualists *because they have received the proof of its truth.* They differ in belief regarding reincarnation, etc., because there is no real proof of their truth. One believes, the other disbelieves. It is not a question of fact; it is only a question of belief.

Scientists sometimes differ in their beliefs, but they must agree on proven facts. Spiritualists also agree on facts but disagree in belief. Close followers of the Christian creeds agree in beliefs because they agree to believe in their creeds. Good Christians agree to agree in belief. True Spiritualists agree to disagree in belief. Christians deify a man and then assume to follow where he leads. Spiritualists worship at the shrine of *truth* and proudly follow wherever *truth* leads. The truths of Christianity are vital to its existence. The creeds of orthodox Christianity are based largely on theories and beliefs of men and are fast crumbling away under the enlightening power of truth. So must it be with erroneous beliefs, false theories, and untrue teachings of Spiritualists, Theosophists and all other cults—they must fade away and disappear under the bright rays and shining light of absolute truth.

"The truth shall make you free," said Jesus. No truer words were ever spoken. Jesus said also: "Ask and ye shall receive" "Knock and it shall be opened unto you," "Seek and ye shall find." Then let all who would know the truth seek it, as Spiritualists have done and are doing.

Modern Spiritualism is the only one among the thousand religions that proves its truth or attempts to do so. Many of its truths are proven; but the theories of Spiritualists, like the theories of the Christians and Theosophists, are not proven true. Let Spiritualists theorize as much as they like, but they should learn to label their conclusions properly; that is, label the proven truths "Truth" and label their theories "Theories," and cease accepting theories for truths and labeling them truths.

If reincarnation is a truth, let believers in it prove it. It can never be anything but a theory until it is proven to be a truth; and since it has never been proven true, it should be placed in its own class and labeled "Theory."

Some theories of the Christian Church are labeled "Infallible Truth," and this has caused divisions and

many denominations are the result. This has also driven many bright men and clear reasoners away from the church; and too often, away from all religion. Let Spiritualists take warning from this and hereafter draw the line between demonstrated truth and unproved theories, putting every theory to the crucial test and calling it always by its proper name. In doing so much controversy and unpleasantness will be avoided. If the doctrine of reincarnation be true, it has thus far developed only into a theory, and a theory that lacks the first bit of evidence. Reincarnation may not be true, though you, dear reader, may chance to accept and believe in it. Probably no creed or theory of life and death is infallibly true in every detail, and for the simple reason that they are man-made, and man a mortal, or man a spirit is not yet perfect in every particular. Creeds are at fault because their makers are faulty.

OUR FAULTS.

We all have faults that others see,
  Though they be hidden from our view;
Let's study self and then may be
  We'll see ourselves as others do.
And when we see a fault our own,
With patience it may be outgrown.

The *Facts* bring proof of things that be,
  While *Theories* may lead astray,
And *Reason* aids men truth to see,
  While *Facts* lead to the truth alway.
Where *Reason* rules the *Wrong* is righted,
  Truth is found and *Error* blighted.

"Prove all things and hold fast that which is good." (I Thess. vi:31.)

THE SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY VERSUS REINCARNATION.

The philosophy of Modern Spiritualism contradicts the doctrine of reincarnation. The question may be asked: "Who is authority for the philosophy of Modern Spiritualism?" The answer is easy. The authority for the Spiritual Philosophy is not as uncertain as is the claimed authority for the Theosophic teachings of reincarnation, or for the truth of the Christian Bible. Authority for these that is reliable is hard to find. But the authority for the Spiritual Philosophy is constantly in evidence. It is given to mortals in all parts of the civilized world by their fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, children and friends who have entered spirit life and have there experienced, studied and learned for themselves the great truths they have revealed to the world which constitute the Philosophy of Modern Spiritualism.

Furthermore, the Spiritual Philosophy never contradicts Science. It is always in perfect accord with

truth, and Spiritualists accept truth wherever found, proclaiming it fearlessly when discovered.

A few of the natural truths taught in the Spiritual Philosophy follows:

Death is just as natural as birth. One enters spirit life in the same condition he is in when he leaves this world, knowing no more and no less. He is the same individual, minus his physical body and plus his spiritual body.

The spiritual world is a real world, a natural world. It is, like this world, composed of substance; rarified, spiritualized, sublimated matter, and everything is governed by law in that world. It teaches that the law of attraction and repulsion is the same and that cause and effect rule, the same as in this world. Loved ones are attracted to each other *and families are reunited to part no more*. Everything is subject to natural law and that means Progression. Evolution continues in the spirit spheres and all souls are on the way to a higher spiritual unfoldment.

The Spiritual Philosophy also teaches that everyone, whether good or bad, wise or otherwise, spiritual or unspiritual, are all subject to the law and each must work out his own salvation, becoming spiritually developed eventually. Schools, colleges and universities of learning are institutions of the spirit-world; and science, art, philosophy, music, etc., are taught. Each soul naturally gravitates to his true condition and advances to a higher one as it becomes qualified to do so. The study of Psychic Science, Spirit Mediumship, Psychology, Psychometry and all that pertains to Spiritual Science, constitutes a part of the study and teachings of that better world.

Wise spirits have learned the laws governing spirit mediumship and they have given to this world the first and only reliable rules and scientific methods of communication between the two spheres of life, and this is a part of the great Spiritual Philosophy.

Spiritualism teaches and demonstrates that man has spiritual faculties, called "spiritual gifts" in scripture, through which spirit communion may be accomplished and spiritual truths may be discerned; that such faculties are natural and belong to the whole human race. We think this the greatest endowment vouchsafed to mankind. The knowledge of this fact is the greatest revelation ever received by man from the spirit side of life. This fact will not be questioned by those who understand Spiritual Science. The spiritual faculties are the most valuable of any of the faculties possessed by man. They illuminate every other faculty, giving them greater power and causing one to see, hear and feel the spirit friends who may be present. These faculties are used by spirits to communicate with men in the mortal form in many and various ways. And still

more, through these faculties man in the mortal is empowered to discern and comprehend spiritual things to a greater or less degree, this depending upon the state or degree of one's spiritual development. These spiritual faculties are not only for use in this world, but they are used in the spirit-world where "spiritual things are spiritually discerned."

These spiritual faculties, like all other human faculties, may be developed and their powers increased by proper training and use, and the Spiritual Philosophy teaches the proper methods to be employed in their development.

Here we wish to say once more to the Spiritualist who believes in reincarnation, what is the use of developing one's spiritual faculties if reincarnation is true and one must go back to child life and learn everything over again, living life after life on this material plane? Why such effort? Why "seek after spiritual gifts," as Jesus advised and good spirits of today urge? Why aspire for any development or unfoldment mentally, morally or spiritually, if it is all to be lost and relearned again and again and lost as often as relearned? Where is the profit in it? What is the use of it?

One of the most beautiful truths taught in Spiritualism is this: We do not lose our friends at death. The father does not gravitate to some sphere so far away that he cannot return to advise and encourage his child of earth. The deceased husband goes not away, but remains near to comfort the wife in her sorrow; and this he does when conditions are made for his coming. The angel mother remains near her child to comfort and bless her. The darlings all who pass on before are not lost to those left behind if their presence and aid is properly sought by those of this life. And when this life shall end with those left behind, *"all are reunited in the heavenly spheres TO PART NO MORE FOREVER."*

Millions of Spiritualists throughout the entire civilized world have received the testimony and the actual proof of the truth of the Spiritual Philosophy. Theosophists and other reincarnationists have given not one single proof of the truth of reincarnation, but say: "The only answer to the query 'Is rebirth a fact?' is, 'Does your soul recognize it as such?' and 'One must realize it within himself.'" Therefore, the verdict with thinkers remains the same: There is no absolute proof of its truth.

Books by Rev. E. W. Sprague

A FUTURE LIFE DEMONSTRATED

OR

TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS A PUBLIC MEDIUM

THE AUTHOR and his good wife, Mrs. C. A. Sprague, are well-known workers in the cause of Spiritualism and have many dear friends throughout the land. They SERVED THE NATIONAL SPIRITUALISTS' ASSOCIATION FOR THIRTEEN CONSECUTIVE YEARS AS MISSIONARIES, visiting a large majority of the States of the Union, holding meetings and seances, giving lectures, and exercising their mediumship from the public rostrum.

The book contains a brief sketch of the author's early life, giving details regarding the development of his own and Mrs. Sprague's mediumship. It is replete with detailed records of spirit manifestations, communications, tests and messages which were given to hundreds in the presence of thousands of people throughout the country.

The author emphatically claims and aims to prove that A FUTURE LIFE IS AS CERTAINLY DEMONSTRATED by Modern Spiritualism as is the law of gravitation or the daily revolution of the earth.

Mr. Sprague's wide experience, both with his own well-developed mediumship and that of Mrs. Sprague's, as well as with many other mediums, for more than a third of a century, gives strength to his claims. He declares that if these recorded facts do not demonstrate a future life, it is useless to look for accurate proof of anything, or to try to demonstrate the simplest fact in nature as being certainly true.

The book contains 362 pages of closely printed matter, also excellent portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Sprague. It is handsomely bound in cloth. **Price, postage paid, ~~$1.25,~~**

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ITS VARIOUS PHASES—HOW DEVELOPED AND SAFELY PRACTICED

A Compendium of Psychic Science for Seances, Circles, Psychic Classes and Individual Use— The Medium's Companion and Guide.

In publishing this book the author hopes to be of some assistance in eliminating the absurd and ridiculous vagaries that have become attached to Spiritualism and mediumship; and to assist in counteracting the extravagant and unjust claims of some of its opponents regarding "the dangers of Psychism," or the practice of mediumship; but most of all, to give encouragement and assistance to mediums in their laudable efforts to unfold the beautiful faculty of mediumship. Every well-developed medium and every well-informed Spiritualist knows that the application of the teachings of Spiritualism is the salvation of mankind, and that Modern Spirit-Mediumship is the rock upon which Spiritualism rests.

It is therefore true that the development of a safe and sane mediumship is a fact of the most vital importance.

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A FALSE DOCTRINE, AND A MENACE TO MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

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of the devil and eternal punishment; that both theories originated in the poorly developed brain of our primitive ancestors.

To know the truth and be free, one should read this work.

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